

# Wild

AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

ONLINE  
SEARCHABLE INDEX  
[www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)

## BUSHWALKING

Snowy Mountains  
and Namadgi  
Grampians  
Central Australia

## TRACK NOTES

Victorian  
wilderness coast

## GEAR SURVEYS

Tents  
for bushwalking  
Water purifiers

Greenland  
walking

Sea kayaking  
Hinchinbrook  
Island

[www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)

Australian owned  
Australian produced



Autumn  
(Apr-Jun) 2005 no 96  
\$7.99 incl GST



**Paddy Pallin Agility Jacket**

Lightweight • Compact • Waterproof



# outdoor essentials



Call us for a free comprehensive catalogue

**Watership Seabird Hat**

Sturdy and crushable • Floats • Dark under brim  
for reduced glare

**Princeton Tec Aurora Head Light**

Lightweight and compact • Water resistant • Pivoting head  
to shine light where you want it

**Macpac Microlight Tent**

1-2 person tent • Lightweight weighs just 1.8kg • Great all-round  
bushwalking tent



# SILVA

means more than just the world's  
most accurate quality compasses



Now you can find the respected **SILVA** name on a variety of the finest instruments designed for the great outdoors. Ask for them at your favourite outdoors shop.  
More information on [www.macson.com.au](http://www.macson.com.au)



**SILVA Digital Pedometer #56013** easily calculates number of steps and distance walked or jogged. Weighs just 32g! RRP approx \$36



**SILVA M4 Headlamp.** Weighs just 80g. With bright, medium, low and blinking modes. Tiltable reflector. Rainproof. RRP approx \$65

**SILVA GPS Multi-Navigator** with features unmatched by any other hand-held GPS. Unique simple 'one-button-press' for return to base. RRP \$795



**SILVA ADC Summit.** A pocket size weatherman! Windmeter, altimeter, barometer, thermometer, windchill and compass. Plus time, date, alarm, chronograph, race timer and weather forecast. RRP \$399



**SILVA Expedition 54L compass.** Features prismatic sight for super accuracy with reciprocal bearings. Romer map scales. Luminous. RRP approx \$182



**SILVA Lite-Tech 10x25 binoculars.** Highest quality BaK-4 emerald coated optics. Nitrogen filled. Waterproof, fogproof and dustproof. RRP approx \$275



**SILVA Voyager 8010 compass** balanced for worldwide use. Luminous. Declination adjustment. Magnifier lens. Various map scales. RRP approx \$60



**SILVA portable solar PowerPak** charges and runs mobile phones, PDAs, radios etc from the sun and re-charges nicad and lithium batteries. RRP approx \$99



**SILVA 'Nomad' electronic compass** sets and stores your bearing and automatically calculates your return bearing. With declination adjustment. Night-light. RRP approx \$180

# SILVA Get out there™

Proudly distributed throughout Australia  
by Macson Trading Company Pty Ltd  
Tel (03) 9489 9766. Fax (03) 9481 5368  
Ask us for a free illustrated catalogue and a RRP list

# DEPARTMENTS

## 5 EDITORIAL

A new era at Wild

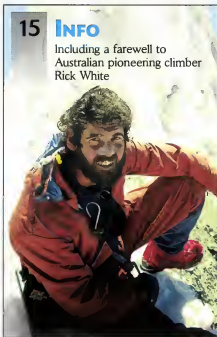
## 9 WILDFIRE



Letters to the Editor

## 15 INFO

Including a farewell to Australian pioneering climber Rick White



## 16 WILD DIARY

What's on, and when

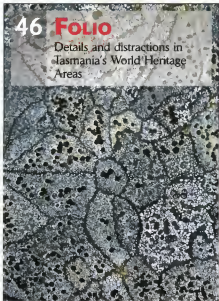
Autumn (Apr–Jun) 2005, issue 96 \$7.99\*

\* Maximum Australian recommended retail price only

Cover Zoë Hamilton on Mt Koonika, the Victorian Alps. Glenn van der Knijff

## 46 FOLIO

Details and distractions in Tasmania's World Heritage Areas

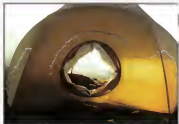


## 58 TRACK NOTES



Victoria's other wilderness coast

## 63 GEAR SURVEY 1



John Chapman's tent survey will help you to find a home away from home

## 71 GEAR SURVEY 2

A water filter survey, by Nick Byrne



## 75 EQUIPMENT

Including 'the world's lightest clothing' and super-duper headtorches



## 77 TRIX

A tea cosy for your head, Stephen Hamilton describes an ingenious stand-in for a hat

## 79 GREEN PAGES



Including a multimillion dollar claim against conservationists by Gunns

## 83 REVIEWS

Including Blue Mountains and Freycinet National Park coffee-table books, history and guidebooks

## 88 WILD SHOT

No response from Santa?

## WARNING

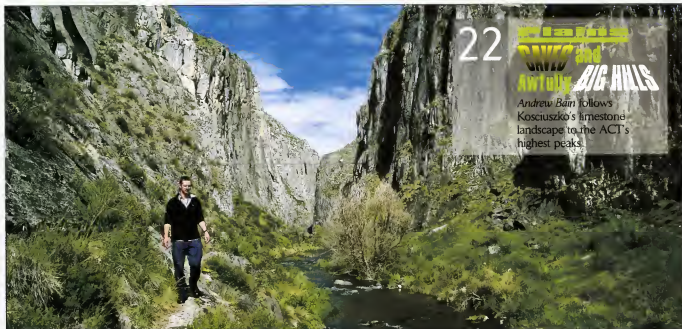
The activities covered in this magazine are dangerous. Undertaking them without proper training, experience, skill, regard to safety, and equipment could result in serious injury or death.



**Wild**  
AUSTRALIAN WILDERNESS LITERATURE MAGAZINE  
Established 1981



# FEATURES



22

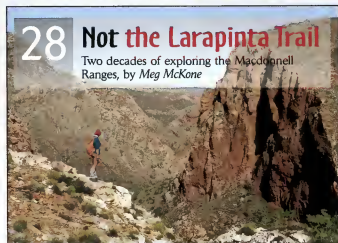
## DRIVEN AND AWTULLY BIG HILLS

Andrew Bain follows Kosciuszko's limestone landscape to the ACT's highest peaks.

28

## Not the Larapinta Trail

Two decades of exploring the Macdonnell Ranges, by Meg McKone



34

## Footloose in GREENLAND

Grati Dixon explores the world's largest island



40

## HINCHINBROOK Escape

Catherine Lawson paddles around a tropical paradise



50

## A Wink, Wintery Weekend

A cold snap in spring turns the Major Mitchell Plateau, in Victoria's Grampians, into a winter wonderland; by Glenn van der Knijff



# Meet the Tikka Headlamp family



## TIKKA PLUS

A 4 LED version. Advanced headlamp offering different modes of lighting.

- Tilting headpiece
- 4 LEDs
- 3 brightness settings, plus a flashing mode
- Push button switch
- 17 metre beam
- Up to 120 hrs run time in economy mode
- 78 gms, includes 3 AAA batteries.



## TIKKINA

A 2 LED version of the popular TIKKA. Perfect emergency / backup light.

- Tilting headpiece
- 2 LEDs
- 13 metre beam
- 120 hrs run time on 3 AAA batteries.
- 78 gms



## TIKKA

A 3 LED version. Powerful LED light.

- Tilting headpiece
- 3 LEDs
- 15 metre beam
- 110 hrs run time on 3 AAA batteries.
- 78 gms

ASK for  
your FREE  
Catalogue

Exclusively distributed in Australia by Spelean Pty Ltd.  
Call 1800 634 853 for your nearest stockist.  
[www.spelean.com.au](http://www.spelean.com.au) email: [tika@spelean.com.au](mailto:tikka@spelean.com.au)

**PETZL®**

hands  
free  
lighting®

# A new era

## Another change of guard at the *Wild* fort

**AFTER 96 ISSUES OF *WILD* AND 92 EDITORIALS**, a different voice from the Editor's chair is unexpected. Over the last 24 years Chris Baxter has overseen thousands of articles, hundreds of contributors and the production of days of reading material. Some of you may know that Chris has been ill for the last few months; he has now stopped work to concentrate on his health and we all wish him a speedy recovery.

However, even without his presence in the office he still has a strong influence on the magazine; Chris is a founder, a Director and remains involved in the running of *Wild*. But it goes much deeper than this. The ethos of the magazine is unchanged from that outlined in the first issue by a botheaded, 30-something Chris: *Wild* is still a celebration of wild places; environmental conservation remains a key focus; we are proudly independent; and our integrity is crucial to both the magazine and the business. This will not change, now or in the future. Your magazine is in safe hands.

Stephen Hamilton has worked at Wild Publications for around ten years, beginning in 1988 as the Advertising Manager. He left in 1995 but returned seven years later, becoming Advertising and Marketing Director and, with Chris, co-owner of Wild Publications. During the last two years he has learned all facets of the business and has now taken over the day-to-day running of the magazine. It is a challenge that he relishes and has taken in his stride.

I am excited about my new position as Editor and look forward to pouring my enthusiasm, ideas and vitality into the role. My knowledge of the magazine and love of the outdoors equip me well for the job. At the beginning of 2003 I was hired as Administration and Editorial Assistant at Wild. I quickly fought my way from the deep, dark administrative jungle to the Associate Editor position, which I held for almost two years. The content of the magazine, the compiling of the departments, production of the surveys, editing, map drawing and administration—all

these were my responsibilities, overseen by Chris's watchful eye. I've learnt how the magazine works and what makes it work; Chris is an excellent and thorough teacher. When he became ill I assumed other responsibilities and *Wild* no 95 was produced with little input from Chris. I hope you agree that it was an excellent issue.

I can't pretend to the 'crusty, seasoned editor' status of my predecessor—when the first *Wild* was published I couldn't even read—but I've been an 'outdoors type' for a long time now. After a few years spent in the high-rise wilds of Bangkok, my brave parents took us on family camping holidays around the 'bush capital' and further afield to reintroduce us to the Australian bush. I've been playing in it ever since, mostly bushwalking, climbing and skiing. While at school I spent weeks and weekends exploring the Victorian Alps and the Canberra region, and by the time I was 21 I'd done some full-on walks both in Australia and overseas, was climbing regularly and had put myself through the torture of mountaineering in New Zealand with boots a size too small. Many other outdoors adventures within Australia and overseas have followed.

During the past decade I've had a variety of disparate jobs; it's only when I began at Wild Publications that I realised how well they equipped me for my position at the magazine. After school the almost obligatory 'tour of duty' of the UK lasted a couple of years as I worked my way around various outdoors centres in the Lake District and Scotland. Back home, an outdoors shop hired me (and gave me plenty of time off to explore) while I put myself through a writing and editing degree at university. Other jobs in PR, editing and graphics followed before I became 'girl Friday' at Wild. More than two years later, here I am.

We're very excited about the future of the magazine; during the last few years it seems that each issue has been better than the last. We've put a lot of work into the appearance of *Wild*, resulting in a magazine

that looks fresh, modern and has received much positive feedback. The excellent content has been due to a great range of material from our contributors, good follow-up on ideas and increased emphasis on the departments. We look forward to continuing this never-ending job of improvement, using the youth, energy and experience of the Wild team.

This magazine has very solid foundations, amazing supporters and a strong direction—we shall continue to build on these while harnessing the vitality and enthusiasm that accompanies change. Chris has pointed out that my appointment is not only a change of guard but a generational and gender transition as well; the magazine will no doubt be different in subtle ways. However, our focus and our aim remain the same, as spelt out in our logo: *Wild* is Australia's wilderness adventure magazine. That will never change.

Another key area in which the magazine has never faltered is its responsibility towards, and dependence on, our readers, contributors and advertisers. In the Editorial in the first issue of *Wild* Chris wrote:

[Wild]...has been made possible by the response of our contributors on one hand and our subscribers and advertisers on the other. The enthusiasm of both has been widespread and substantial. Its continuance will be vital to the magazine's future.

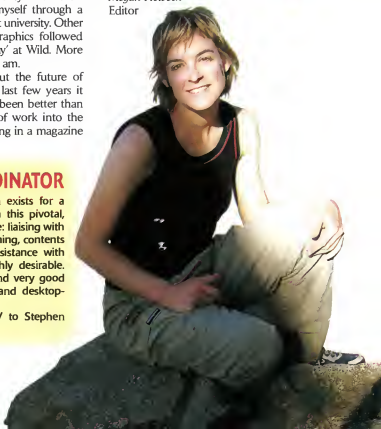
This is as true today, a year away from our 100th issue, as it was then. We look forward to the issues ahead and your continued support. Let us know how we're doing. 🐨

Megan Holbeck  
Editor

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND EDITORIAL CO-ORDINATOR

An exciting, part-time (flexible two–three day), permanent position exists for a suitably experienced and qualified person to join the Wild team in this pivotal, hands-on position at Wild's offices in South Yarra, Victoria. Tasks include: liaising with contributors; general and editorial administration; assistance with planning, contents management and the compiling of magazine departments; and assistance with marketing. To be active in bushwalking and/or rockclimbing is highly desirable. Necessary skills include excellent written and oral communication and very good computer skills; proven reliability and accuracy required. Editorial and desktop-publishing experience preferred.

If you fit these criteria, send a handwritten letter and typed CV to Stephen Hamilton, Wild Publications Pty Ltd, PO Box 415, Prahran Vic 3181.



# TASMAP

for adventurous bushwalkers

Explore Tasmania's unique wilderness safely. Tasmap National Parks Maps include detailed notes describing track conditions, distances, times, safety, history, flora, fauna and geology.

Tasmap also offers a range of series maps covering the state at 1:250 000, 1:100 000 and 1:25 000.



Maps are available from Service Tasmania outlets, Tasmap agents and bookshops statewide. Orders direct to TASMAP: GPO BOX 44, Hobart Tasmania, 7001, Australia T: + 61 3 6233 7741 F: + 61 3 6233 6071 E: LIS.Sales@dpiwe.tas.gov.au www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au

## TASMANIAN expeditions

Cycle Walk Raft Climb Kayak

Visit Tasmania's spectacular wilderness

Fully-inclusive, guided small-group walks, from cabin-based day walks to extended bushwalks.

- ♦ **Cradle Mountain Overland Track**  
Our guides will share their love and knowledge of Tasmania's premier National Park with you on our 8 day trek.
- ♦ **South Coast Track**  
A challenging 9 day walk in Tasmania's south-western wilderness.
- ♦ **Walls of Jerusalem Circuit**  
A 6 day exploratory trek through this remote alpine wilderness — a walker's paradise.
- ♦ **3 day Cradle or Freycinet Walks**  
Cabin-based day walks exploring 2 spectacular National Parks.



For further information  
Call 1300 666 856 or  
email [info@tas-ex.com](mailto:info@tas-ex.com)  
[www.tas-ex.com](http://www.tas-ex.com)

## Wild

AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

Managing Editor, Director Chris Baxter OAM

[editorial@wild.com.au](mailto:editorial@wild.com.au)

Advertising & Marketing Director

Stephen Hamilton

[advertising@wild.com.au](mailto:advertising@wild.com.au)

Editor Megan Holbeck

[editorialadmin@wild.com.au](mailto:editorialadmin@wild.com.au)

Sub-editor Mary Harber

Subscriptions Tony Cox

[mailorder@wild.com.au](mailto:mailorder@wild.com.au)

Accounts Fiona Jenkins

[accounts@wild.com.au](mailto:accounts@wild.com.au)

Design & production Bruce Godden

[production@wild.com.au](mailto:production@wild.com.au)

Consultant Brian Walters SC

Special Advisers

Stephen Buntor, John Chapman, Andrew Cox,

Grant Dixon, Geoff Law,

Roger Lembit, David Noble

Publisher Wild Publications Pty Ltd

ABN 42 006 748 938

Printing York Press Pty Ltd

Colour reproduction Karibu Graphics

Distribution Gordon and Gotch Australia Pty Ltd

Subscription rates are currently \$31.95 for one year (four issues), \$58.90 for two years, or \$82.50 for three years, to addresses in Australia. For overseas addresses, the rates are \$56.95, \$110, and \$159, respectively.

When moving, advise us immediately of your new and old addresses to avoid lost or delayed copies. Please also send your address sheet received with a copy of Wild.

Advertising rates are available on request. Copy deadlines (advertising and editorial):

8 October (summer issue), 15 January (autumn), 14 April (winter), 15 July (spring).

See below for publication dates.

Contributions, preferably well illustrated with slides, are welcome. Contributors' Guidelines are available at [www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)

Written submissions should be supplied by email in either PC or Mac format. Hard copy should also be supplied. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced, on one side of sheets of A4 paper. Please ensure that submissions are accompanied by an envelope and sufficient postage. Names and addresses should be written on manuscripts and photos. While every care is taken, no responsibility is accepted for material submitted. Articles represent the views of the authors, and not necessarily those of the publisher.

All correspondence to: Wild Publications Pty Ltd, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181, Australia.

Phone (03) 9826 8482

Fax (03) 9826 3787

Email [management@wild.com.au](mailto:management@wild.com.au)

Web site [www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)

Wild is published quarterly in the middle of the month before cover date (cover dates: January–March, April–June, July–September, October–December) by Wild Publications Pty Ltd. The Wild logo (GSN 1030-469X) is registered as a trade mark, and the use of the name is prohibited. All material copyright 2005 Wild Publications Pty Ltd. All rights reserved.

No part of the contents of this publication may be reproduced without first obtaining the written consent of the publisher. Wild attempts to verify advertising, track notes, route descriptions, maps and other information, but cannot be held responsible for erroneous, incomplete or misleading material.

Wild is printed on Monza paper, which is made of 35 per cent pre-consumer waste and 15 per cent post-consumer waste that has been recycled and oxygen bleached. The cover has a water-based varnish (not an environmentally detrimental UV or plastic finish).



Professional qualifications for  
**Outdoor Leaders**  
recognition of your current skills



We will recognise your current skills as credits towards your qualification (RPL) and assist you to gain any additional skills that you might need to become qualified. We train Outdoor Leaders to the latest National Standard.

Get qualified in Abseiling, Rockclimbing, Canoeing, Kayaking, Bushwalking, Navigation, Mountain Biking & Ropes Courses. Plus electives in ATSI, Remote Operations, 4WD & Camp Craft, Instructional skills and Adventure-based counselling.

You'll benefit from our flexible delivery and distance education strategies. Call Worthwild on (07) 3833 4330 or 0413 157 358 or email: [info@worthwild.com.au](mailto:info@worthwild.com.au)



Packtowl® is the original high-performance camping- and travel towel that makes terry-cloth towels obsolete for outdoor use. Lightweight and compact, Packtowl fits easily in your pack, duffie, or travel kit. Besides keeping you clean, Packtowl comes in handy for plenty of other reasons around camp. Use it to wipe up puddles on your tent floor, insulate and pad gear inside your pack, and provide emergency first aid dressing. It doubles as a dish cloth, pot holder, and sweat-absorbing bandana.

Now available in a colourful new print, Packtowl is thicker and more durable than off-brand wannabe towels. Best of all, it has super absorbency. The large Packtowl soaks up a full litre of water. Wring it out to release 90% of its absorbed liquid, and Packtowl is immediately ready to soak up more.

Hang it in the breeze by its attached snap loop to air dry, or tumble dry at home. Packtowl is machine- or hand washable and becomes softer with each washing.



# PackTOWL®

Distributed by Spelean Pty Ltd. Call 1 800 634 853 for your nearest stockist.  
<http://www.spelean.com.au> <http://www.msrgear.com>

## What you drink can affect your trip...

That's why it's critical to carry a water filter you can rely on. MSR water filters use ceramic technology, are more user friendly and pump water at up to 1 litre per minute. Now you can spend less time filtering and more time watching the sunset...



Exclusively distributed in Australia by Spelean Pty Ltd.  
 Ph. (02) 9946 9800 Fax (02) 9946 9811  
 e-mail [msr@spelean.com.au](mailto:msr@spelean.com.au) [www.spelean.com.au](http://www.spelean.com.au)



## Enjoy really good coffee on your next trip!



Why not enjoy a delicious espresso with the sturdy, yet lightweight aluminium GSI Espresso Maker! Simply fill the basket with well-ground coffee, add water to valve level and screw the unit shut. Place it on your stove at low heat and within minutes, the steam pipe delivers a flavourful cup of European-style brew. Available in one- and four-cup sizes; red, blue, green or polished. Cups and espresso makers are also available in stainless steel.

Or if you prefer to brew great coffee regardless of where you are, try the new Lexan® JavaPress™. Perfect for camping, backpacking, boats, caravans and car camping, just add boiling water to coffee grounds, let stand for a minute or two and you will have a perfect cup of fresh coffee. The GSI JavaPress is dishwasher safe and can also be used for preparing tea! Available in 280 ml, 925 ml and 1.5 L sizes.



### Lexan® Waterproof Utility Boxes

LEXAN® Waterproof Utility Boxes are nearly indestructible; available in three sizes. They are clear, so you can see what's inside, and have attachment loops to tie them down securely!



Lexan® is the toughest thermo-plastic available...with high impact strength, dimensional stability and temperature performance from -55°C to +130°C. It's dishwasher- and microwave safe and incredibly lightweight.



You can make a complete, convenient setting from our range of 2 bowls, large plate and knife, fork, spoon and teaspoon. And they won't burn your fingers! Colours: cutlery - Eggshell or Emerald (above), plates and bowls - Glacier Ice or Emerald. Cutlery is available in bulk, or in three- or four-piece sets. Even smaller is the Tekk range of cutlery (right).



The GSI Lexan® Wine Glasses and Flutes are the perfect addition for your next camping trip or picnic. The patent pending design unscrews at the midpoint of the stem, so the base can be compactly snapped into the bowl for packing and storage. Super lightweight and nearly indestructible, yet elegantly shaped.



The GSI H2O Bottle in Lexan, is designed to be easy to grip, and has a standard thread so you can use it with a water filter. Much better than those plain and boring cylindrical bottles, it's tapered for ease of storing in pockets. And, yes, it comes in a range of four colours - red, blue, purple and yellow! 1 litre.



### Bugaboo™ Tefflon®/Aluminium Cook-sets

The aluminium Bugaboo™ cook-sets are lightweight and the Teflon interior coating makes cleaning a breeze! The sets nest compactly and the lids set as fry pans. A Diamondback Gripper™ and mesh storage-bag are included in each set.

GSI exclusively distributed in Australia by Spelean Pty Ltd. Ph. 1 800 634 853 for your nearest dealer e-mail [gsiinfo@spelean.com.au](mailto:gsiinfo@spelean.com.au) <http://www.spelean.com.au>



# WATERPROOF & BREATHABLE 3/4 JACKET

RAP <\$65.00



Available in 8 colours (XS — 4XL)  
Matching overpants also available <\$30.00

Available at leading outdoor stores  
For further information  
phone: (03) 9416 9000  
Email: [sales@3peaks.com.au](mailto:sales@3peaks.com.au)  
Visit: [www.3peaks.com.au](http://www.3peaks.com.au)

# of the island State?

## Hit them in the hip pocket

HAVING JUST REREAD YOUR LATEST EDITORIAL (*Wild* no 95) and being disillusioned by the current election result, I would like to share my idea to combat the destruction of old-growth forest in Tasmania. During the election both the mainland and island governments harped on about saving jobs and this is the Achilles' heel whereby we defeat the foe. Unfortunately, it means hardship for both the Tasmanian people and those who love to visit and walk in Tasmania.

Yes, you guessed it—my family is boycotting Tasmania until old-growth forests are taken off the menu of Japanese and world consumption. It worked against South Africa and we'll soon see what happens if people refuse to visit Tassie. The Tasmanian Government will struggle to justify, say, 5000 forestry jobs against 100 000 plus jobs in the tourist industry!

Noticed yesterday that the ferries are down-sizing so maybe the ground swell has started already?

Don Noble  
Melbourne, Vic

### Great minds, fools and ultra-lightweight

What is it, I wonder, that makes many people, unconnected in any understood way, come up with the same idea? Great minds, perhaps, thinking alike?

It was about a year ago that I first started wondering why I was regularly hefting a twenty kilogram, eighty litre pack on four- or five-day trips. The rucksack alone, empty, weighed three-and-a-half kilograms.

I went off into the Victorian Alps a couple of weeks ago and my pack this time weighed twelve kilograms including food for five days. Instead of an eighty litre rucksack, mine was rated at 30 litres. Admittedly, I had to sling a few things on the outside of the pack but this was, after all, a bit of an experiment on my part...

I am expecting to reduce my load to around seven kilos within a few trips, not counting food. I will have replaced almost all my walking equipment by then, at a cost roughly equivalent to taking my family to a good restaurant three times. And, looked

after, the new equipment should last at least ten years. I'll be seventy-one by then and looking for even lighter gear I expect.

And by the way, Roger Caffin, my mother used to say it was fools who seldom differed, rather than great minds.

Michel Dignand  
Wagga Wagga, NSW



'Ultra-lightweight Walking' by Roger Caffin in *Wild* no 94 is a very well-balanced article. The gear used is well explained and, more importantly, claims are not exaggerated. Roger has clearly emphasised that the equipment used is for two-season use. The following will demonstrate what can happen.

In February 2004 I was having lunch on Rabbit Pass in New Zealand and decided to retreat back to Ruth Flats because of deteriorating weather. Emerging from the swirling cloud was a walker swanning along at a good rate of knots. I noticed his sandals and my first words were, 'Hi, you are brave climbing up Wilkin Face in sandals'...I also noticed that his pack was an ultra-light make. John mentioned the incoming weather and carried on. I finished my lunch and...re-treated back to Ruth Flats.

I had just finished erecting my tent when John reappeared...I noticed his pack had a large tear and the main strap on his sandal was broken...he had had a 'slight fall' in the scree on Rabbit Pass. He was lucky, very lucky. With the aid of my GPS we soon found the bivvy about 15 minutes away. John set up his camp under a rock (bivvy) with a piece of six by four tarp...

I eventually reached Wanaka and obviously John had also made it back. Department of Conservation advised that it had been snowing in the area for the last two days, with freezing levels dropping to 1200 metres. John had reached the limit of his resources and had any other eventuality occurred he would have become a statistic.

Specialised kit is for specialised applications. I suggest that some of the advertising and techno blab for this lightweight kit is irresponsible. Inexperienced users...see the kit displayed in alpine conditions and assume it is suitable for the same.

Peter Vella  
Eumundi, Qld

If I may be so bold as to step up in defence of Roger Caffin and in reply to Sean Wood's letter, 'A little Australian light on the subject' (*Wildfire*, *Wild* no 95). Sean mentions a number of manufacturers whose gear is available in Australian retailers' stores whilst bagging Roger for promoting the importing of gear. Well, Sean, actually GoLite and MSR are US companies and the items available at the Australian retailers are, wait for it, imported! Wilderness Equipment manufactures its gear overseas and at least in respect of tents and packs, would not be considered lightweight.

Roger was referring to manufacturers of Australian lightweight gear who are far and few between and even the one or two products available from Australian manufacturers are generally not in the league of the lightweight/ultra-lightweight overseas manufacturers. Maybe Sean should do some real research on that despised Internet first!

Andrew Priest  
Perth, WA



Cactus T-Gaiters. Proofed 12oz Australian made C-Canvas fabric, bombproof Cactus 'ethic construction', stainless steel buckles for your replaceable under boot straps and a beefy 50mm hook/loop side closure. Sweet.



WE PROUDLY DESIGN AND MANUFACTURE PACKS AND WORK CLOTHING FOR TRAMPING, CLIMBING AND INDUSTRY. CACTUS PRODUCTS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH OUR WEBSITE. FREIGHT FREE. WWW.CACTUSCLIMBING.CO.NZ

## Arnhem Land

### With Aboriginal Guides

#### Take your pick — old or new

The *Jawoyn Explorer* is our third trip to the upper Katherine River and the "other" Katherine Gorge. There are no tourists here.

*In Leichhardt's Footsteps* is new, following part of Ludwig Leichhardt's epic 1844–45 journey across Australia.

#### These trips are special!

- > You enter restricted areas, beautiful campsites and great scenery that you cannot visit without a local guide.
- > Australia's traditional Aboriginal culture is at its strongest in the Top End. This allows our guides to give you an unparalleled insight into their culture.
- > Helicopter food-drops, prohibited in Kakadu, minimise your pack weight.



**Too long?** Both trips are in two sections, either of which can be done on its own.

See the Kakadu and Top End trip list on our **website** or ask us for more information.

[www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au](http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au)

Willis's Walkabouts 12 Carrington Street  
Millner NT 0810 Email: [walkabout@ais.net.au](mailto:walkabout@ais.net.au)

Phone 08 8985 2134 Fax 08 8985 2355



# DrySacks

- Seven Sizes
- High Performance Rolltop Closure
- Watertight Heat Tape Seam Sealed
- Bright white inner coating makes it easier to find contents

- Waterproof • Compact • Lightweight • Versatile

[www.seatosummit.com.au](http://www.seatosummit.com.au)

• Bushwalking • Canyoning • Kayaking • Marine Use • Adventure Racing • Mountain Biking





## Specialist Repairs & Alterations

- Replacing Zips, Buckles & Clips
- Fleece & Ski Clothing
- Reproofing Rainwear
- Gore-Tex™ Rainwear
- Sleeping Bags
  - ~ Goose Down added
  - ~ Cleaned
- Reproofing Tents
- Tent Poles
- Tents
- Packs

### Australia Wide Service

#### Venus Repair Workshop

Suite 36, 104 Bathurst Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Tel: 02-9267-0706  
Fax: 02-9267-0702  
venusrepairs@bigpond.com

(see listing in classifieds)

## Alert and alarmed

Wildfire in *Wild* no 95 included a letter from Rod Costigan of Adventure Victoria outlining some concerns about a Victorian government project, the Adventure Activity Standards.

If recent history here in Victoria is any guide, criticism of the AAS or the suggestion that the AAS are ill conceived will provoke a response that includes references to ethics, accountability and duty of care...For good measure, defence of the AAS usually includes chilling reference to the sustainability of the industry.

Apart from some alarming specific requirements in the bushwalking AAS that Rod outlined, much of the AAS are vague...There is a reason for such vague content, of course. It is just not possible to reduce an adventure activity conducted in the natural environment, especially bushwalking...to a list. It is a flawed assumption behind the AAS that the sorts of skills and knowledge required for the safe conduct of a bush activity can be listed definitively in a few pages.

It is not a lapse that the AAS are vague on important things and insist on the trivial or excessive...It is an inevitable outcome of a process that badly misunderstands the nature of safety in the bush.

The claims that the AAS serve the safe conduct of an activity, define the standard for the duty of care of a leader, and will assist organisations in obtaining insurance protection are both fanciful and alarming. The recent improvements in insurance availability result from specific changes to legislation in each State, not Victoria's AAS.

But now the AAS exist, they may well be used in determining a duty of care question, or an insurance claim. Then the AAS are just as likely to work against, rather than for, a leader or organisation...

The AAS may now go interstate, apparently in blind acceptance of the flawed assumptions behind the AAS and the assertions made about their benefits. *Wild* readers interstate, be alert and alarmed.

Duncan Brookes  
Essendon, Vic

## The unrepentant gardener

It was disappointing to read vitriolic comments from Jay Reilly (*Wildfire*, *Wild* no 94) who condemned the role of National Parks staff who work to protect National Parks from inappropriate usage.

Rangers do not discourage visitors; they do provide track notes and verbal advice concerning remote area bushwalking but they avoid promoting a remote destination...

If National Park rangers do not attempt to control usage, the occasional unpleasant visitor who...degrades a site will lower the value of the experience for subsequent visitors for years to come. Knowing that there are rules of decency and common sense to be observed in a National Park—and that such rules can be enforced—helps to control ill-usage...

Advertising a walk or a destination is certain to increase usage...The wet tropics of

north Queensland is a high rainfall area. Remote bushwalking destinations receive up to four metres of rain in a good year. Vegetation growth and recovery on exposed, naturally leached sites is very slow.

Jay Reilly may have thought to denigrate rangers by describing them as glorified gardeners. If a gardener is one who actively cares for plants and the garden habitat they create, glorified gardeners have no reason to be shy of their vocation.

Rupert Russell

Retired ranger, unrepentant gardener  
Mt Molloy, Qld

## Bush predecessors

It was refreshing to see the article in *Wild* no 95 on Aboriginal rock art discoveries; a timely reminder that the areas we like to think of as untouched 'wilderness' were in fact home to Aboriginal people for tens of thousands of years. Over the millennia, they devised a way of life that, while caring for the country, also modified it in order to enable their own survival.

As I go bushwalking with my food and shelter conveniently (if heavily) stashed away in my pack, I think from time to time of the people who were able to live so richly in what may seem to us a very harsh environment.

A fellow walker once directed me to a sandstone cave above a rugged tributary of the Colo River in Wollemi National Park where over thirty hand stencils, including those of young children, decorated the walls. With its peaceful outlook and golden roof curving protectively over the sandy floor, it was a magic spot. It is both saddening and humbling to come face to face with such direct evidence of our predecessors in the bush.

Meg McKone  
Holt, ACT

## Less than perfect balance

I find the criticism of trekking poles unfair. They may not be ideal in some conditions but for many people they make the outdoors accessible. For those with vision impairment they aid in depth perception and feedback. For those with knee pain, trekking poles take a lot of strain off the knee on downhill. For those whose balance is less than perfect they may save a fall, a sprained ankle, or worse.

Trekking poles may be a waste for the fit 20-somethings, but for those older walkers with slight disabilities they are a device to help you get from A to B safely. I see the damage caused by poles as trivial in a world of logging and bulldozers. Isn't the track a scar anyway?

Paul Sillato  
Burnie, Tas

Readers' letters are welcome (with sender's full name and address for verification). A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Write to *Wild*, PO Box 415, Pahravan, Vic 3181 or email editorial@wild.com.au

# Thirsty Work?



platypus

Flexible Hydration Systems

Exclusively distributed in Australia by Spelean Pty Ltd. Ph: (02) 9966 9801 Fax: (02) 9966 9811 e-mail: platypus@spelean.com.au www.cascadedesigns.com

Hydration packs aren't just about carrying water, they're about fit, function and style. Our new body-hugging packs and contoured shoulder-straps keep the pack out of your way, while the four-way tube routing lets you decide where the tube emerges. Every pack has a silver lining making it easy to find small items, and the separate reservoir pouch has a large opening making refilling a breeze. The high-intensity light and reflective panel give great visibility on dull days or at night. The light gives 150 hours on a single small watch battery, and is switchable between continuous and flashing modes.



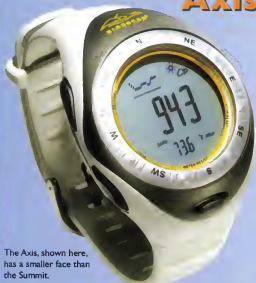
There are three models in the Watt pack range:

KiloWatt: 1.8 L fluid, 3.5 L cargo capacity.

MegaWatt: 2.0 L fluid, 7.6 L cargo capacity.

TeraWatt: 3.0 L fluid, 18.3 L cargo capacity.

## Two Great Value Alternatives Axis and Summit



The Axis, shown here, has a smaller face than the Summit.



Barometer



Time



Altimeter

The Summit showing the different display modes.

### Altimeter

- Digital altimeter
- Resolution 1 ft (1 m) with working range from -2296 ft (-700 m) to 29,500 ft (9000 m)
- Stores 20 altimeter data readings with altitude, time, and date
- User option for feet or metres
- Accumulated and maximum altitude reading

### Barometer

- Digital barometer
- Resolution 0.1 mbar with working range from 300 mbar to 1100 mbar
- Barometer pressure graph shows relative changes for the last 24 hours
- Weather forecast
- Barometer pressure updated every minute

### Compass

- Digital compass
- Resolution 1 degree with 16 direction pointers
- Leveling bubble for increased accuracy
- Adjustable declination
- Displays bearing in degrees and cardinal points
- User option for single- or continuous reading

### Temperature

- Digital thermometer
- 0.1 degree resolution
- Working range from -4F (-20C) to 158F (70C)
- User option for Celsius or Fahrenheit

### Time

- Time with hour, minute, second, weekday, and day
- User option for 12/24-hour format
- 2 time zones
- Auto calendar from 2000 to 2049

### Alarm

- 2 daily alarms and hourly chime signal
- 20 second alarm sound at alarm time

### Chronograph

- 1/100-second-resolution chronograph with 24-hour working range
- Chronograph with lap/split time measurement
- 100-lap memory capacity in a maximum of 30 runs
- Each run stores the run number, month, day, lap number, lap split, time and average lap time

### Backlight

- 3-second EL backlight

### Water Resistant

- 30 metres
- One CR2032 battery



HIGH GEAR®

Exclusively distributed in Australia by Spelean Pty Ltd Ph: 1 800 434 853 e-mail: highgear@spelean.com.au http://www.spelean.com.au



YOU'D RATHER BE...

HIKING



GEAR FOR PLACES YOU'D RATHER BE...

OLD: BRISBANE, FORTITUDE VALLEY, TOOWONG NSW; SYDNEY, ALBURY, BONDI JUNCTION, CHATSWOOD.

Women's Strato & Men's Stratus Jackets  
• Supple three layer GORE-TEX® XCR® fabric  
is used in the body for comfort • Heavier three  
layer GORE-TEX® XCR® fabric is used as



THE X-1

Light as a trainer, drains like a strainer  
Monofilament mesh with 360° drainage  
Wrapr Lite™ support and motion control system  
Heel-to-toe Protection Web™ technology  
Weight-reduced outsole tread

WATER IS MY

TEVA

 **Teva**

the original sport sandal... the future of outdoor footwear  
[www.teva.com](http://www.teva.com) ©2005 teva





# RICK WHITE

**Michael Meadows farewells one of the pioneering heroes of Australian climbing and the outdoors industry**

The death of pioneering Queensland climber Rick White in November 2004 marks the end of an era for 'adventure' climbing in Australia.

He joined the fledgling Brisbane Rockclimbing Club in the late 1960s after moving to Queensland from South Australia and had soon repeated the hardest routes in the region. He found himself at the forefront of a new wave of climbing activity that pushed Queensland to the top of the sport in Australia.

White and his early climbing partner Chris Meadows made an historic discovery on 9 November 1968 when they found the cliff now known as Frog Buttress. Today there are around 400 different climbs at the internationally acclaimed crag.

In 1972 White joined with local climbers Ted Cais and Ron Collett to put up what was then the hardest route in Australia, Valhalla (22) on the East Face of Mt Maroon in south-east Queensland. The following year he became the first Australian to climb The Nose, a 900 metre route on El Capitan in Yosemite National Park, teaming up with British mountaineer Doug Scott. In the same season in Yosemite, he was the first Aussie to climb the celebrated Salathé Wall. Following an unsuccessful attempt to climb FitzRoy in Patagonia early in 1974, he founded the outdoors equipment company Mountain Designs.

In 1979 White made a solo ascent of the 562 metre Balls Pyramid near Lord Howe Island. Two years later, he joined Scott and others to establish a new route up the 6500 metre East Ridge of Shivering in the Garwhal Himalaya. He celebrated his 33rd birthday on the climb, surviving a 250 metre fall with Australian mountaineer Greg Child on the descent. The 13-day route they climbed was the hardest ever done at altitude at that time and remained unrepeatable for 15 years.

White and his second wife Jane organised two Himalayan expeditions—to Cho Oyu in 1990 and to Mt Everest the following year—when fate intervened: the collapse of a long-time financier for Mountain Designs meant he lost control of his business, incurring large debts.

It was at this time he was diagnosed with the incurable muscle-wasting disease, inclusion body myositis—it meant an end to his career as a climber. Ironically, it was the same year in which his

early climbing partner Chris Meadows took his own life. Undeterred, White moved on, starting up a new business. In 2001—almost 30 years after he had started Mountain Designs—he was invited to rejoin the company as research and development adviser.

In recent years he channelled his passion into coaching a group of local junior climbers, travelling hundreds of kilometres—usually at his own expense—to deliver his charges to local, national and, more recently, international climbing competitions.

Rick White began in the days when hard climbing required an adventurous and often visionary spirit, and he stubbornly maintained a clean-climbing ethic until his death from cancer. To the very end his attitude was typical of the extraordinary optimism and drive that was the hallmark of his life as one of Australia's leading postwar climbing identities.

*Rick White on his way down to Base Camp after a 250 metre fall on Shivering.*

Doug Scott



## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

**Large areas reopening in Kosciuszko National Park**

Large areas of Kosciuszko National Park in New South Wales that have been closed since the fires in summer 2003 have been reopened to bushwalkers. According to the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service, the post-fire recovery across the park has been variable. Some areas at higher altitude including The Rolling Grounds, Watsons Crag, Hannells Spur and Mt Jagungal will remain closed for rehabilitation, but many other areas are now accessible. The NPWS has asked that wherever possible people walking in the newly opened areas avoid previously burnt ground, steeper slopes and recovering bogs. Visit [www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au) for further details and a map showing park closures.

## Great Australian Bushwalk

**Andrew Cox reports on the first annual event**

The first national Great Australian Bushwalk was held in October 2004, with more than 3000 people participating in the free event. Bushwalks were held in each State and Territory of Australia on the same day, with more than 70 different walks in total. The largest bushwalk was in the Australian Capital Territory where 540 people participated in two walks organised by the National Parks Association and Environment ACT. NSW Premier and event patron Bob Carr, ACT Chief Minister John Stanhope, and SA Premier Mike Rann all joined the bushwalks. The walk was first held as a NSW-wide event of 20 walks in September 2003 and will be held again in mid-spring 2005.



Wild Diary listings provide information about rucksack sports events and instruction courses run by non-commercial organisations. Send items for publication to the Editor, Wild, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181. Email [editorial@wild.com.au](mailto:editorial@wild.com.au)

## March

- 19 Aulume 6 hr **R** WA [www.wa.rogaine.asn.au](http://www.wa.rogaine.asn.au)  
 19-20 Rovling 6/15 hr **R** Vic <http://vira.kassell.org/vira.htm>  
 20 CCCC Summer Series NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 20 SGO Rod Fry Memorial Race **C** WA [www.wa.canoe.org.au](http://www.wa.canoe.org.au)  
 25 AC Asutralian Freestyle Championships **C** NSW [www.canoe.org.au](http://www.canoe.org.au)  
 25-28 Ecology Camp, East Gippsland **B** Vic [www.eastgippsland.net.au](http://www.eastgippsland.net.au)  
 25-28 Scouts Dragon Skin Rogaining **R** NSW [www.dragonskin.org.au](http://www.dragonskin.org.au)  
 29-29 Three Peaks Race **M** Tas [www.threepaks.org.au](http://www.threepaks.org.au)  
 27 State Mountaineering Championships **BR** NSW (02) 4627 1246  
 27-28 AC Australian Marathon Championships **C** Qld [www.canoe.org.au](http://www.canoe.org.au)

## April

- 1-3 Trailwalker Melbourne **BR** Vic [www.octam.org.au/trailwalker](http://www.octam.org.au/trailwalker)  
 3 Paddy Pallin 6 hr **R** ACT (02) 6249 9019  
 9 Adventuregame **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 16 WCC NSW Winter Marathon Series Race 2 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 16 Autumn 12 hr **R** SA <http://sa.rogaine.asn.au>  
 16 12 hr **R** Tas (03) 6223 4405  
 17 CCCC Summer Series Race 4 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 23 Southern Charity Challenge **BR** SA [www.southerncharitychallenge.com](http://www.southerncharitychallenge.com)  
 23 Autumn 12 hr **R** SA [www.sa.rogaine.asn.au](http://www.sa.rogaine.asn.au)  
 23 Autumn 24 hr **R** WA [www.wa.rogaine.asn.au](http://www.wa.rogaine.asn.au)  
 23-24 Autumn 24 hr **R** NSW [www.nswrogaining.org](http://www.nswrogaining.org)  
 23-24 2 x 6 hr **R** Vic <http://vira.kassell.org/vira.htm>  
 30 Quoll Adventure Race **M** Qld [www.adventureracing.com.au/qar](http://www.adventureracing.com.au/qar)  
 30 Queensland Schools **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 30-1 May NCC Northern Series Race 1 **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)

## May

- 1 CCCC Summer Series Race 5 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 7 Wildwater Race 1 **C** WA [www.wa.canoe.org.au](http://www.wa.canoe.org.au)  
 14 12 hr **R** Vic <http://vira.kassell.org/vira.htm>  
 15 CCCC Summer Series Race 6 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 15 NWCC Southern Series Race 1 **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)

- 21 ICC NSW Winter Marathon Series Race 3 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 21-22 Australian Rogaine Championships **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 28 ACT Mountain Running Championships **BR** ACT [jgharding@bigpond.com](http://jgharding@bigpond.com)  
 29 Wildwater Race 2 **C** WA [www.wa.canoe.org.au](http://www.wa.canoe.org.au)

## June

- 5 CCCC Summer Series Race 7 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 5 Northern Series Race 2 **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)  
 11-13 Murray 100/200/Relay **C** SA [www.mcc.canoe.org.au](http://www.mcc.canoe.org.au)  
 16 CCCC Summer Series Race 8 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 18 Australian Mountain Running Championships **BR** ACT [jgharding@bigpond.com](http://jgharding@bigpond.com)  
 18 MWKC NSW Winter Marathon Series Race 4 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 18-19 NWCC Southern Series Race 2 **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)  
 18-19 Schools/Scouts 2 x 6 hr **R** Vic <http://vira.kassell.org/vira.htm>  
 18-19 Winter 24 hr State Championships **R** WA [www.wa.rogaine.asn.au](http://www.wa.rogaine.asn.au)  
 19 Wildwater Race 3 **C** WA [www.wa.canoe.org.au](http://www.wa.canoe.org.au)  
 19 Paddy Pallin 6 hr **R** NSW [www.nswrogaining.org](http://www.nswrogaining.org)  
 25-26 State Championship 12/24 hr **R** ACT (02) 6249 9019

## July

- 3 CCCC Winter Series Race 1 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 3 FOC Northern Series Race 3 **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)  
 3 Wildwater Race 4 **C** WA [www.wa.canoe.org.au](http://www.wa.canoe.org.au)  
 3-6 National Outdoor Conference **C** [www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au/conference](http://www.outdoorcouncil.asn.au/conference)  
 4 State Mountain Running Championships **BR** Qld (07) 3378 4183  
 10 LCRK NSW Winter Marathon Series Race 5 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 16 School Marathon Championships **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)  
 16 State Championships 24 hr **R** NT [www.nt.rogaine.asn.au](http://www.nt.rogaine.asn.au)  
 16-17 6/12 hr **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 17 NWCC Southern Series Race 3 **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)  
 17 Wildwater Race 5 **C** WA [www.wa.canoe.org.au](http://www.wa.canoe.org.au)  
 23 8 hr **R** Vic <http://vira.kassell.org/vira.htm>  
 23-24 State Championships 24 hr **R** SA <http://sa.rogaine.asn.au>  
 31 CCCC Winter Series Race 2 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)

## August

- 7 Northern Series Race 4 **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)  
 7 State School-age Championships **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 7 3 hr **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 13 CCCC NSW Winter Marathon Series Race 6 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 14 Metrogaine 6 hr **R** ACT (02) 6249 9019  
 20 Lake Macquarie 6/12 hr **R** NSW [www.nswrogaining.org](http://www.nswrogaining.org)  
 20 Snogaine **R** Vic <http://vira.kassell.org/vira.htm>  
 20-21 Southern Series Race 4 **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)  
 20-21 Spring 24 hr **R** WA <http://wa.rogaine.asn.au>  
 21 CCCC Winter Series Race 3 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 27 Lake Macquarie 6/12 hr **R** NSW [www.nswrogaining.org](http://www.nswrogaining.org)  
 27 Kangaroo Hoppit **S** Vic [www.hopit.com.au](http://www.hopit.com.au)  
 27-28 Wildwater State Titles **C** WA [www.wa.canoe.org.au](http://www.wa.canoe.org.au)

## September

- 3 Bigaine **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 3-4 Marathon State Championships **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 11 CCCC Winter Series Race 4 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 17 Nightgaine 5 hr **R** ACT (02) 6249 9019  
 17 9 hr **R** NT (08) 8941 1059  
 17 8 hr Championship **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 17-18 AJUMC 12/24 hr **R** SA <http://sa.rogaine.asn.au>  
 17-18 State Championship 24 hr **R** Vic <http://vira.kassell.org/vira.htm>  
 24 LFKC NSW Winter Marathon Series Race 7 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 24-25 Marathon State Championships **C** Qld [www.canoeqld.org.au](http://www.canoeqld.org.au)  
 25 CCCC Winter Series Race 5 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)

## October

- 8-9 State Championship 24 hr **R** Tas (03) 6223 4405  
 15 Metrogaine **R** Qld [www.qldrogaine.asn.au](http://www.qldrogaine.asn.au)  
 15 6 hr **R** SA <http://sa.rogaine.asn.au>  
 15 Spring 12 hr **R** WA <http://wa.rogaine.asn.au>  
 15-16 Marathon World Championships **C** WA [www.canoe.org.au](http://www.canoe.org.au)  
 15-16 State Championship 24 hr **R** NSW [www.nswrogaining.org](http://www.nswrogaining.org)  
 15-16 Veterans Challenge 12 hr **R** Vic <http://vira.kassell.org/vira.htm>  
 16 CCCC Winter Series Race 6 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 22-23 Hakesbury Canoe Classic **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)  
 30 CCCC Winter Series Race 7 **C** NSW [www.nswcanoe.org.au](http://www.nswcanoe.org.au)

Activities: **B** bushwalking, **BR** bush running, **C** canoeing, **Co** conference, **M** multisports, **R** rogaining, **S** skiing. Organisations: AC Australian Canoeing CCCC Central Coast Canoe Club FCC Fitzroy Canoe Club ICC Illawarra Canoe Club LCRK Lane Cove River Kayakers LFKC Lilli Pili Kayak Club MWKC Manly Warringah Kayak Club NCC North-west Coast Canoe Club NWCC Newport Waters Canoe Club SCC Swan Canoe Club WCC Windsor Canoe Club. Rogaining events are organised by the State rogaining associations. Canoeing events are organised by the State canoeing associations unless otherwise stated.

## CORRECTIONS AND AMPLIFICATIONS

The 'unnamed knoll' referred to on page 36 of 'The Southern Main Range' article in *Wild* no 94 was officially named Cuthbertson Peaks four years ago. It was named after the late Jim Cuthbertson, a well-known bushwalker in south-east Queensland. Mt Bartle Frere is the highest mountain in Queensland, not Mt Superbus as stated on page 34 of *Wild* no 95.

## One Planet up in smoke

### But rebuilding has begun

The One Planet factory in Melbourne caught fire on 21 November 2004, totally destroying the factory, stock, materials, patterns and machinery. Fortunately, the computer server was saved from the fire and the backup was kept off site, allowing the company to begin rebuilding almost immediately. The fire was caused by an electrical fault. One Planet is among the few outdoors equipment companies that still manufacture in Australia and has vowed to continue to do so. Most staff took leave and will return to their positions as soon as possible. The new range is expected to be available from May 2005.



## Paddling update

Races and polluted places

The 2004 Murray Marathon finished in hot conditions on New Year's Eve, with around 1000 people competing in the many categories of the 404 kilometre, five-day race. Australian Canoeing reports that the weather was changeable during the event, ranging from chilly mornings and gusty winds to temperatures in the high 30s on the last day when approaching Swan Hill, Victoria. The ACT's Simon Stenhouse won the overall handicapped champion title after taking line honours on each day of the race. The Mercantile Kayak Club

from Victoria were overall winners in the K1 event, with runners-up Wyndham Redlands Canoe Club B from NSW.

The *Age* reported on 14 January that the Environment Protection Authority is investigating pollution levels in Melbourne's Yarra River after recent revelations that three men have suffered lung haemorrhaging, delusions and kidney failure after kayaking in the urban waterway over the last three years. Two of these men contracted leptospirosis—an illness caused by coming into contact with the urine of

***And they're off! The school and juniors relay teams start the Murray Marathon. Liam Lynch***

infected animals—after they accidentally swallowed water while kayaking. Rowers also found around 60 dead eels floating between the Richmond Rail Bridge and Dights Falls in January. The Victorian Government wants to make the Yarra River safe for swimming by 2008.

## CAVE RAVE

**Stephen Bunton with an update on the underground world**

On 19 November 2004 an earthquake measuring 4.7 on the Richter scale hit Tasmania, its epicentre just south of Mole Creek. A guided party was in one of the local caves at the time and reported that it seemed as though the cave was about to flood. This quake was slightly larger than that which hit the area in 1997. No damage to the caves was reported after either earthquake.

In January, 50-year-old Australian Dave Shaw died in Boesmansgat (Bushman's Cave) in South Africa, the world's third-deepest freshwater cave. He was a member of an eight-person team trying to recover the body of Deon Dreyer, a South African who died in 1994 while trying to establish the cave-diving depth record. The recovery party had reached a depth of 280 metres when Shaw failed to make a prearranged rendezvous at ~220 metres. Both bodies later floated to near the surface and were recovered.

In January Alan Warild was presented the Edie Smith Award, the highest recognition

possible for an Australian caver. (See profile of Alan Warild in *Wild* no 52.) He received the award at CaveMania, the 25th Biennial Conference of the Australian Speleological Federation held at Dover, Tasmania, in recognition of his explorations in the world's deepest caves. Warild was the keynote speaker for the conference, opened by the Governor of Tasmania, William Cox. At the conference it was also announced that Australia's longest cave, Bullitta Cave in Gregory National Park, Northern Territory, is now known to be more than 100 kilometres in length; and that the world's deepest cave, Voronia Cave in Abkhazia, is now claimed to be 2080 metres deep, making it the world's first cave of more than two kilometres in depth.

***Alan Warild in a cave in Spain, October 2004. Enrique Ogando***





# SAFELY ON TRACK

## MT310

COSPAS-SARSAT satellite compatible personal EPIRB. Simultaneous 121.5/243 MHz operation, 48 hour minimum transmission time. Flasher/Beeper alarm for both self-test and operate modes. Designed and made in Australia. 5 Year Warranty

## GPSmap 60C

Feature packed, rugged but lightweight and waterproof. 256 colour, highly reflective display, up to 30 hour battery life in typical use. Built in auto route basemap, 56 MB of memory for optional MapSource City Navigator and Marine Charts. Offering full 'turn by turn' route calculation and 'breadcrumb trail'.



[www.gme.net.au](http://www.gme.net.au)

MELBOURNE: (03) 9590 9333  
ADELAIDE: (08) 8234 2633

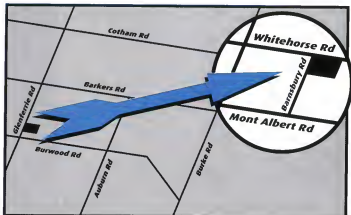
SYDNEY: (02) 9844 6666  
PERTH: (08) 9455 5744

BRISBANE: (07) 3278 6444  
AUCKLAND: (09) 274 0955



# EMC HAS MOVED TO THE SNOWSKI CENTRE

Eastern Mountain Centre has moved to a bigger, better location at the **Snowski Centre**. Check out our huge choice of gear for XC and Telemark skiing, plus our all new downhill range. We still offer expert boot fitting and a great range of bushwalking clothing and equipment. Now you can avoid the chaos of Glenferrie Road and park with ease!



**EMC now at the SNOWSKI Centre, 68 Whitehorse Road. Phone 03 9817 1477**



# MONT Trusted.



Trust has to be earned, and just like the people who use our products, we at Mont never stand still.

In over twenty years of business, our passion for providing innovative, reliable products has not diminished. The Mont range of quality products has stood the test of time.

Take Mont on your next adventure and we know you'll love your new equipment for years to come.

Mont Adventure Equipment.  
Trusted in the wild for over 20 years.



[www.mont.com.au](http://www.mont.com.au)

an Australian owned company

## SCROGGIN

### Adventure Activity Standards to go national?

Rod Costigan from Adventure Victoria reports that there have been further developments in the Victorian Government's attempt to introduce Adventure Activity Standards in the State. The AAS attempt to define the prudential measures that bush travellers should follow and the documents are expected to be used in legal proceedings. (For further information, see *Wildfire*, page 11 and *Wild* no 95, pages 9 and 21.) AV has recently seen a QC's opinion that an organisation that endorses such a document will increase the exposure of its members to litigation. The opinion also noted that it could encourage the false supposition that the community at large shares the same obligations under current law as professionals do when they go out in the bush. A committee of State governments on recreation and sport intends to recommend that the Victorian model be replicated by other State governments.

### Four Peaks race

This annual event took place on the Melbourne Cup weekend last year, with hundreds of people taking part in the challenging runs up Mystic Hill (11 kilometres), Mt Feathertop (12 kilometres), Mt Hotham (15 kilometres) and Mt Buffalo (10.5 kilometres) over the four-day event. David Osmond from the ACT won the men's title for the second time, in a total of four hours and 44 minutes, while Vanessa Harvard from NSW finished in five hours and 55 minutes. Further results and details about this hard-core event can be found at <http://brightalpineclimb.netc.net.au>

### Grampians grunt

Bob Langham reports that he recently completed a traverse of the Serra Range in Victoria's Grampians, taking ten days to complete the walk. He was spurred to action after reading in *Wild* that it was believed a full traverse of the range from Mt Rosea to Mt Sturgeon had never been done. Langham walked solo for the last seven days after his companion suffered blisters and knee pain. He encountered dense scrub, sleet and heat on the trip, and had a nasty encounter with a dislodged rock. He was glad to finish the trip and, according to 'the missus', he really did pong! 🐼

Readers' contributions to this department, including high-resolution digital photos or colour slides, are welcome. Items of less than 200 words are more likely to be published. Send them to *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181 or email [editorial@wild.com.au](mailto:editorial@wild.com.au)

# Wide Feet a Problem?

## MEINDL of Germany

Handcrafted Award-winning Technical Footwear for over 320 Years



Tofana MFS Wide

### Tofana MFS Wide

- Category: Designed for aggressive & steep trails & some off-trail use.
- One piece leather upper.
- Tofana is made on an especially wide comfort last.
- Lining material: Gore-Tex or leather.
- Air-Active footbed.
- Vibram multigrip sole.
- Sizes 6-12 in half sizes.



*Importers of the Finest European Sporting Goods*

• Melbourne • Auckland • Christchurch • Alexandria

**Stäger Sport** Pty Ltd

AUS Telephone: 0031 3 9595 0235  
NZ Telephone: 0064 3 448 8844

AUS Email: [stagerau@bigpond.com](mailto:stagerau@bigpond.com)  
NZ Email: [stagenz@xtra.co.nz](mailto:stagenz@xtra.co.nz)

## BLACK PEAK ICE



Instruction courses  
Technical water ice  
Private heated hut

Aspiring Guides  
Your alpine specialists  
Wanaka, New Zealand  
Phone +64 3 443 9422

[www.aspiringguides.com](http://www.aspiringguides.com)



## Food, water, KTI mini SAT-ALERT

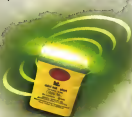
**The essentials when you take a hike, go bush, set sail, take off!**

When you go flying, hiking, boating, skiing or four-wheel driving, be really prepared. Insist on packing the new KTI mini sat-alert RB3 emergency beacon. Once simply activated, it transmits continuously for up to four days, ensuring your signal is received by the emergency services. Designed, manufactured and supported in Australia, the unit is Australia's first microprocessor-controlled, pocket-sized beacon transmitting on both 121.5 and 243 MHz international distress frequencies simultaneously. The new optional strobe light can be seen at night for distances of more than four kilometres. It is buoyant, and waterproof to a depth greater than three metres. Unlike other units, the batteries are fully replaceable. This is not a throw-away. KTI mini sat-alert is designed to the personal EPIRB requirements of AS/NZS 4330:2000 with approvals from the Australian Communications Authority and approved by CASA to the portable E.L.T. requirements of CAR252A.



Weight: 215 grams.  
Dimensions 11 x 8 x 3.6 cm.  
Warranty: 5 years parts and labour.

**KINETIC TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL PTY LTD** 2004 00 002 410 000  
1 Kemble Street, Cheltenham East, Vic 3192  
• Phone (03) 9583 9566 • Fax (03) 9583 9805  
• Email [info@kti.com.au](mailto:info@kti.com.au) • Internet [www.kti.com.au](http://www.kti.com.au)  
Dealer enquiries welcome.





Freephone 1800 141 242  
[www.HikingNewZealand.com](http://www.HikingNewZealand.com)

Milford Track  
 Routeburn Track  
 Abel Tasman Walk  
 Hiking Safaris  
 Antarctic Expeditions  
 and more....

**HIKING**  
 New Zealand

3 times Tourism Award Winners



**ROCK**  
 Australia's climbing magazine

Moonarie  
 Castle Hill  
 bouldering

Ozymandias  
 Ropes survey  
 Extreme  
 mountaineering

**GREAT  
 SUBSCRIPTION  
 DEAL**

Phone  
 (03) 9826 8483  
 or visit  
[www.rock.com.au](http://www.rock.com.au)  
 for details.

WMA 1/04

**ONE PLANET**

**THEN** 21st November 2004  
**ONE PLANET** factory goes  
 up in smoke (she's all gone mate)



**NOW** The One Planet team is all fired up  
 and busy organising a new factory,  
 new machinery and **NEW PRODUCTS**.  
 (Aussie made of course)

**FUTURE** **WATCH THIS SPACE**  
**BECAUSE WE'RE COMING BACK**  
**(AND SOON)**

BORD

# Plains CAVES





# and Awfully **BIG HILLS**



**Andrew Bain follows Kosciuszko's limestone landscape to the Australian Capital Territory's highest peaks**

ON THE COOLEMAN PLAIN, FAR FROM ITS namesake peak, Kosciuszko National Park is almost unrecognisable. Tucked into the park's north-eastern corner, the Cooleman is an alpine anomaly, a karst land where limestone gorges, caves and the magic tricks of Cave Creek are more striking than the mountains. It's a place described by John Siseman in his guidebook to the 683 kilometre Australian Alps Walking Track as 'perhaps the most unexpected feature along the entire Track'.

The Cooleman Plain is pinched between the highest mountains of New South Wales and the highest mountains of the ACT though proximity to the Main Range and Mt Jagungul has made the latter peaks afterthoughts. Yet from the open sweep of the Cooleman Plain, it's Bimberi Peak (1911 metres) and Mt Murray (1845 metres)—the ACT's two highest mountains, straddling the NSW/ACT border—that loom the largest, beckoning keen walkers across the plain and beyond.

I began my walk to the two mountains at the Cooleman Mountain camp-site, perched atop a ridge 140 metres above the Cooleman Plain. A fire track rolls down the hill from here and within 15 minutes I was on the plain.

As the convoy of a four-wheel-drive club rumbled by I wandered at the road edge, soon rising back into the trees and the fenced yards of Coolamine Homestead, the first of a number of High Country huts along the route of the walk.

Like the Cooleman Plain, the homestead takes its name from an Aboriginal word for the area: Coolalamine. Drawn here by the lush alpine plain, Sir Terence Murray was the first to settle on the homestead site in 1839. In the 1880s it became an outstation of Yarralumla Station and the current buildings, now listed by the National Trust and National Estate, were constructed. Four structures

*Andrew Bain in Clarke Gorge, 'the show-piece of the Cooleman Plain'.*

All photos by the author

remain including a cheese hut—the oldest interlocking log cabin in Kosciuszko National Park.

Beyond Coolamine, with the fire track now free of traffic, I dropped again towards the plain, emerging to a glimpse of Clarke Gorge ahead. A great gash in the tussocky earth, this gorge is the show-piece of the Coolman Plain, its grey limestone walls sliced neatly by Cave Creek.

The fire track continues almost to the mouth of the gorge but the most interesting approach is far more circuitous. Stepping out across faint wheel tracks I left the road, heading across a plain that looks more like a sweetly rolling English landscape than a harsh alpine environment.

Green posts were reliable guides through a scribble of tracks, past sink-holes and tiny waterways that disappeared into the porous limestone earth as quickly as they appeared. At Cave Creek the makeshift path turned briefly upstream, crossing the creek before looping once more across the plain and returning to Cave Creek in a slippery descent at the edge of Murray Cave.

One of Cave Creek's most interesting features, Murray Cave is a former spring entrance running 200 metres into the earth to a siphon pool. In extreme drought the siphon pool runs dry (it dried only three times last century), opening the cave another 300 metres.

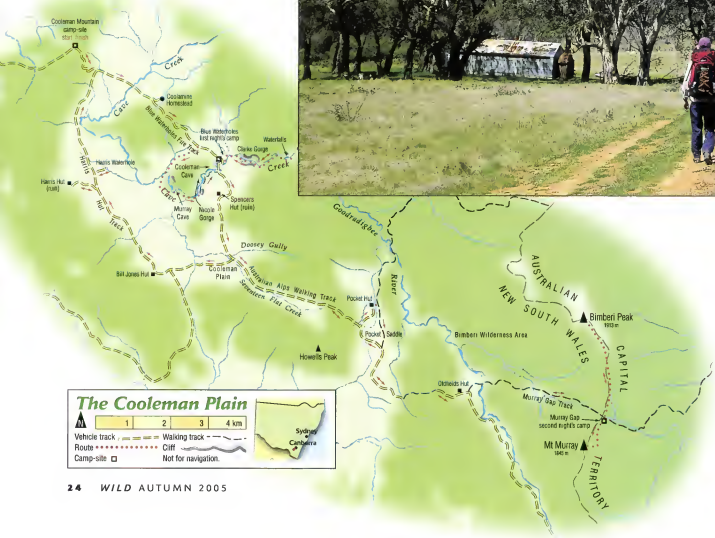
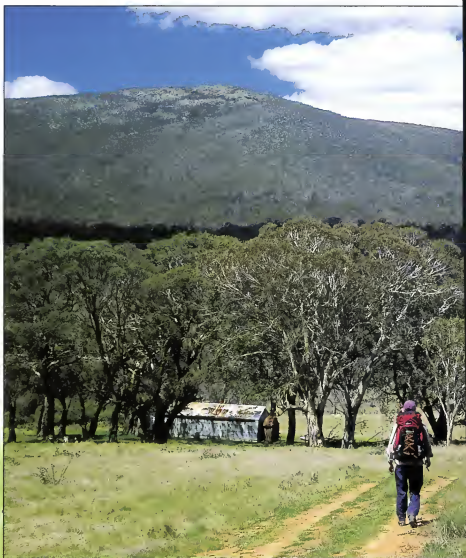
It was far from a drought when I entered the cave's keyhole opening, taking a sharp left turn inside and splashing my way to-

wards the siphon pool. My wet feet told their own story: a month of heavy spring rain meant that little on the Coolman Plain was as expected.

Cave Creek is normally no more than a stony bed at this point: a series of springs pour to the surface a short way downstream at Blue Waterholes and Cave Creek truly begins. But as I continued along the creek through smaller Nicole Gorge, I was forced to ford and re-ford the creek, the water ris-

ing to above my knees. Past Coolman Cave and Right Coolman Cave, the two joined by a narrow passage, I squelched through snow grass tussocks and the start of a blackberry infestation into my first night's camp at Blue Waterholes.

Blue Waterholes is usually Cave Creek's rabbit-out-of-a-hat trick. The parched creek-bed suddenly bursts to watery life, streaming from beneath a small spur. But the deluge had skewed things again. Blue Waterholes



ran a tannin-like brown, instead of the blue of its name, and the water merged into the flowing creek rather than creating it. Camped on its banks, looking across the water to cliffs, the scene seemed more like Victoria's Werribee Gorge than Kosciuszko National Park.

In the cold of the next morning I slid my feet back into wet boots and took up where I'd finished off the previous night. Nicole Gorge had been little more than an appetiser

What the gorge had in depth it lacked in length—within minutes I popped out of its eastern end. Moments later it was as if there had never been a gorge; the earth flattened and the walk returned to a familiar pattern of crossing and recrossing the deepening creek. Laid bare by fire, Cave Creek turned to rapids as it shuttled through a mess of boulders.

The creek poked through another gorge before slipping away over a pair of waterfalls and on to the Goodradigbee River. At the waterfalls, about an hour from Blue Waterholes, I turned back.

Gathering my pack, I cut again through the tight, boot-filling meanders of Cave Creek and was away, winding first through a wide gully where the flies were as prolific as the alpine

My sudden appearance set in motion a mob of the horses, one standing as twitchy sentry while the others galloped across my path and on to a far corner of the plain. It was a scene I'd repeat four or five times over the coming days, scattering brumbies on my outward and return journeys.

As the track dipped into Doosey Gully, turning towards the plain's finger-like extension into Seventeen Flat, it met a path coming from the right and joined with the Australian Alps Walking Track. One of the country's finest long-distance tracks would now be my guiding line into Murray Gap.

Between limestone outcrops and through fences erected by early farmers who saw the cleared plain as their job partly done, the path clung to the northern edge of Seventeen Flat. My twin goals, Bimberi Peak and Mt

Murray, now stood directly ahead, the midday sun glistening off the patchy summit of Bimberi. Almost 24 hours after first setting foot on the Cooleman Plain I finally left it, rising over a spur from Howells Peak only to drop on to another plain: the smaller Pocket Saddle. Faint tracks ran away north and following them for five minutes I came to modern-looking Pocket Hut, painted the colour of a berry and its logbook filled with mentions of brumbies and wild dogs.

Pocket Saddle was set inside a saucer of mountains with Bimberi Peak the most prominent—a shining star drawing me east. At the saddle's end, the path turned into the Murray Gap Fire Track. Though I was in Aus-

**↳ Tucked into the park's north-eastern corner, the Cooleman is an alpine anomaly, a karst land where limestone gorges, caves and the magic tricks of Cave Creek are more striking than the mountains. ↲**

**Above, approaching Oldfields Hut, Bimberi Peak behind. Right, brumbies racing across the Cooleman Plain.**



for the deeper, more impressive Clarke Gorge. The route to Bimberi Peak and Mt Murray steered away from the gorge—but still it beckoned. The mountains could wait.

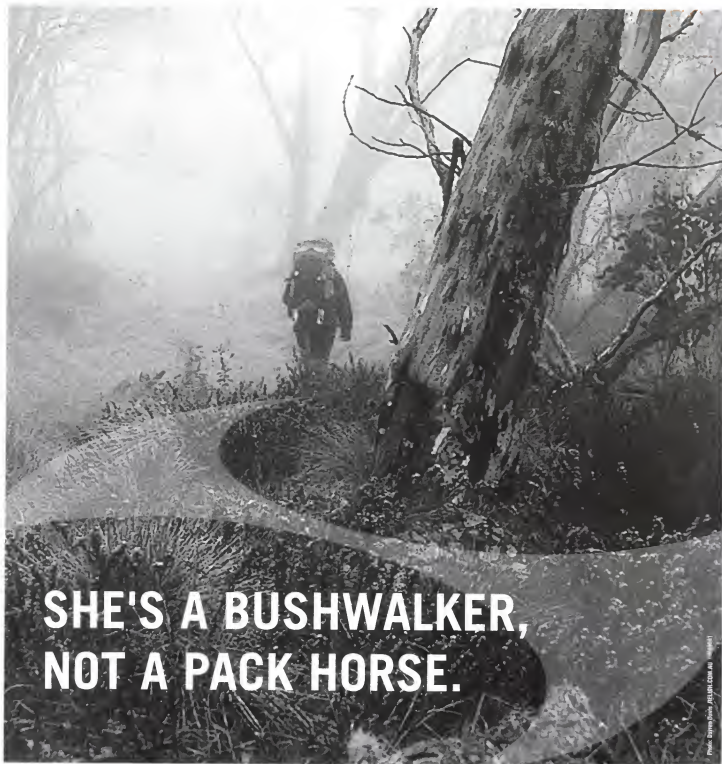
Metres downstream from camp I splashed back across Cave Creek, then crossed over low bluffs into the high, grey line of the gorge. Inside, the creek lapped over the path and I splashed on, ushered through the limestone slot by swallows.

wild flowers. The rusted roof of the ruined Spencers Hut was barely visible off to the right, sitting incongruously at the edge of an enchanted forest of snow gums.

Out of the snow gums, I emerged again on to the Cooleman Plain, a place already busy with its own life: kangaroos grazed, rabbits scampered from the path and sulphur-crested cockatoos pulled at the grasses. But mostly the plain belonged to brumbies.

tralia's highest National Park it was only now, well into my second day, that I began my first real climb. Ascending, I negotiated a fine, uncomfortable line between breathing heavily and not swallowing the hundreds of flies that had chosen to accompany me up the hill.

One more small plain separated me from the final haul into Murray Gap. On this plain sat Oldfields Hut like a bush manger. Ap-



**SHE'S A BUSHWALKER,  
NOT A PACK HORSE.**

**AND WE GUESS YOU ARE TOO.**

Holbrook Jackson, the famous English writer from early last century, once wrote, "Genius is initiative on fire!". Now Holbrook may not have realised it at the time, nor may he have been an active outdoor pursuitist, but he stated the philosophy that now marks the path for KOVEA, the world's leading manufacturer of compact, tough and reliable gas appliances. You see, KOVEA appreciates what it is to be a bushwalker, paddler, cycle or ski tourer. That's why their range of compact stoves and lanterns are perfectly designed for your next adventure.

**Enjoy what you do. Don't be a pack horse.**



KOVEA Camp-4 Hose Stove  
TKB-0211



proached from this direction it looked little more than an abandoned shed in a stand of black sallows. But from the front it was a classic piece of High Country architecture with roughly hewn slats for walls and a veranda supported by logs. Imagine Craig's Hut with authenticity.

Bill Oldfield had an 8800-acre lease in the National Park until 1948 and built the three-room hut in 1925. It had a grandstand view of Bimber Peak and Mt Murray, their forested slopes climbing out of the Goodradigbee River ahead. Their shape from here was described by Klaus Hueneker in *Huts of the High Country* as 'like giant breasts with deflated nipples'. I confess to seeing less remarkable shapes; mountains that looked like mountains.

I entered the Bimber Wilderness, which sprawled across the border and into the ACT's Namadgi National Park. An entry notice warned of unsigned paths, clearly oblivious to the large 'Murray Gap' sign standing proudly on the pass. The track grew fainter but it was a simple route into Murray Gap, a steady climb through regenerating forest and squelching across the edge of Dunn's Flat.

Murray Gap announced itself with frog song, its bips, beeps and blips rising from the water that had transformed the pass into a high-rise swimming pool. Clinging to its shoulder, I searched amid the snow gums for dry land and pitched my tent.

My twin peaks—Bimber Peak and Mt Murray—climbed directly out of Murray Gap but with the afternoon ageing I had time to ascend only one. Following the time-honoured vegetables-before-meat principle, I chose Mt Murray, leaving the highest and best peak until morning.

Though both mountains are trackless, they offer different experiences. Bimber arcs out of the pass, rising to a broad summit ridge. On Mt Murray there is no ridge, the peak towering as conical as a volcano 300 metres straight out of the gap. A shorter climb, it is also the steeper, heading up through sparse forest until there is no more up to go.

After 30 minutes I reached the top, which was capped in granite, but I quickly discovered I'd come to the wrong summit.

The grassy knoll a few hundred metres west stood higher by about 10 metres. I trudged across in true peak-bagger style.

On the summit snow gums bent obedient to the prevailing winds, fortunately absent this evening. The entire floor plan of my walk was revealed, the hills carpeted to within metres of the summit and the bare floor of the Cooleman Plain and Pocket Saddle stretching away west. More strikingly bare was the Curango Plain, south of Cooleman, its waterways glistening like tin and widening into Tantangara Reservoir. On the

distant horizon was the streaked skyline of the Snowy Mountains—Kosciuszko National Park as I had previously known it—while behind and so near, Canberra was blocked from view by the surprisingly impressive peaks of Namadgi.

I turned back from the mountain beneath a cloudless sky that had no plans to stay that way. Through the night it rained heavily and by morning it seemed clear that I'd miscalculated—I'd had my vegetables but might be robbed of my meat. Cloud rested wearily on Murray Gap and somewhere inside was Bimber Peak, whitened out like a misspelled word.

Murphy's Law of bushwalking. I counted one cloud in the sky as I approached the hut; it had disappeared by the time I left.

From Oldfields Hut, I was to retrace my steps to Doosey Gully, almost elbowing my way through brumbies once again. At the edge of Pocket Saddle, half a dozen horses stepped out of the bush just as I was about to step back in. At their head was a beautiful white brumby still fitted with a bridle. Entering the trees, I was torn between admiring the horses and watching out for the magpies that were having a belated spring.

On the Cooleman Plain, Bimber Peak and Mt Murray grew as faint as memories,



## Andrew Bain

is a Melbourne writer who spends too much time wandering when he should be working. He is the author of *Headwinds*, a book about a 20,000 kilometre cycling journey around Australia.



## Camp-site amongst the snow gums at Murray Gap.

Optimistically, I began to ascend the mountain, imagining one foot in Kosciuszko National Park and the other in Namadgi as I headed blindly up the slope as straight as practical until my legs sensed the flatness of the summit ridge. The beauty here didn't come from the view but from the closeness of the snow gums, their glistening trunks pressed into a mould of mist and providing the single brightness in a dark morning.

Reaching the summit, I looked across the world and saw the inside of a cloud. At least I had the previous night's view still imprinted in my mind—the plains, the Snowies—and I imagined, in vain, that I saw it all again. I didn't linger; what would have been the point?

The return route from Murray Gap was like a different world: the sun from the day before had become fog and the track was now a river of the night's rain streaming off the pass. But by Oldfields Hut, one hour away, the day had burst into brilliance—

and at Doosey Gully I turned from my approach route and briefly followed the AAWT. I soon left it to head towards the rusted roof of Bill Jones Hut, a small, corrugated-iron box that remained somehow homely.

The course of the walk was now elementary: follow along the tree line until arriving back at the base of the hill from where I had started. But the walk's pleasures weren't over.

From the hut I entered what felt like true karst country; the earth grew a limestone skin, its sink-holes working like drains. Though I could see the indent of nearby Cave Creek, still flush with water, the plain itself felt more and then alpine.

I descended to Harris Waterhole, a decent-sized tarn that now seemed more like an oasis. From here, Mt Murray barely peeped over the horizon—Bimber had disappeared some time before—and flies and ants quickly chased me on. The plain narrowed and I walked once more alongside Cave Creek. The sound of water, usually so rare on the Cooleman Plain, carried on the wind but for the first time in three days my boots were dry. ☀

NORTHERN TERRITORY EXPLORATION

# Not the Larapin

Two decades of exploring the Macdonnell Ranges, by *Meg McKone*



# ta Trail



ONE BALMY, LATE WINTER'S DAY IN 1980 I stood beside a wizened callitris on the narrow summit ridge of an ancient mountain range. The view was extensive, the horizon distant, but what caught my attention lay almost at my feet—a huge amphitheatre hundreds of metres deep, buttressed by wild outcroppings of russet rock that leaped up from a canyon so narrow that the bleached boulders of its bed could only be seen in one or two places. Even the course of the creek was difficult to discern. It seemed to take a right-angled bend and then snake its way round a huge, red buttress before losing further height to empty out on to the plains beyond.

It was my first trip to the Macdonnell Ranges, a spectacular series of more or less parallel ridges that stretch for hundreds of kilometres either side of Alice Springs. Leading the trip were Frank and Joan Rigby, already veteran explorers of this remote area; indeed, Frank and Henry Gold had published a book, *The Macdonnell Ranges*, in 1973. However, the possibility of ever exploring the bottom of the gorge beneath us was far from anyone's mind. The slopes from the ridgetop were far too steep and loose to risk finding a route down, the canyon itself seemed to be edged with vertical cliffs and broken by internal drops, and attempting an entry from the plains would require finding a route over the range to the northern side.

Eleven years later we sat beneath the same native pine eating our lunch, intrigued to the point of seriously considering a trip to find a way into the remarkable gorge beneath us. Since it was unnamed on the map, we racked our brains for a suitable name until Frank Rigby, musing on its seemingly impregnable nature, came up with 'the Canyon of Defiance'. In 1992 we set out, determined to reach its inner depths.

The route over the main range by a relatively low saddle was quite easy. Once on the northern plains we turned west, wending our way across spinifex-clad spurs and into dry, rocky creek-beds, most of which were inconveniently at right angles to our line of travel. There were two questions in our minds: would we recognise our defiant canyon from the bottom end and, of greater practical importance, would it contain any drinkable water?

We need not have feared on either count. Although we passed several interesting-looking gorges, ours stood out from the rest. A wooded valley curved gently through a fold in the lower spurs, flanked on either side by high, red cliffs. Further upstream the cliffs became even higher, ending in the summit ridge from where we had first seen the canyon all those years ago. We dropped our packs on the shingle beneath a tall river red gum and walked upstream to search for the all-important liquid. After only fifty metres there it was: three pools of clear water set in bedrock, one above the other, flowing (well, trickling) from the mouth of the can-

*Pat Miethe high on the cliffs above  
Hugh Gorge. All photos by the author*



yon. It's hard to describe the elation we felt at finding such a pure and plentiful supply, especially after the arid country we had been traversing all morning.

We continued upstream past more moss-lined pools, pushing through bright gold, prickly wattle, pendant red-flowered, holly-leaved grevilleas and a host of other shrubs. A dry waterfall soon barred our way, offering two possibilities—an exposed scramble round one side or a chimney beside a large chockstone.

We headed back downstream to set up camp as it was getting late. In the morning we witnessed one of the wonders of the Macdonnells—sunrise on the north-facing cliffs. At first light the ancient rocks take on an ethereal, salmon-pink glow that fades as the light strengthens. Then, just as you think it's all over, the sun comes bursting over the horizon and splashes the cliffs with brilliant

leaving us totally surrounded in red rock glowing with reflected light. Another, deeper pool seemed to bar our way but we were able to straddle it without a swim. At the far end was another chockstone with enough space behind to wiggle up rock smoothed by countless aeons of floods and soon we were at the end of the road—a circular bowl filled with rounded pebbles beneath a vertical drop of about six metres above which the canyon curved out of sight.

How I longed for a rockclimber with some grippy climbing shoes to scamper up and throw me down a rope-ladder! However, even though the most tantalising part of the canyon was beyond our reach, it had been a totally involving and exhilarating experience. In 1996 we returned with a climber but as the access route took two days it was too far to carry much climbing gear. Indeed, we nearly didn't bring a rope.

it Crisis Rock. But we couldn't get up the final climb behind the buttress; it was way beyond our league.

By now you've probably noticed that I haven't mentioned the exact location of these trips. Perhaps the most exciting, rewarding kind of bushwalking you can do is to explore an area for yourself and there aren't many places left where this is still possible.

‘Better than those bloody shitty little Blue Mountains canyons!’ he exclaimed, although he did admit later that perhaps this was a little extreme.■

crimson—and you can lie snugly in your sleeping-bag while watching the whole fantastic show!

The next morning we were back up the gorge, ready to storm the waterfall one way or another. The chimney looked less scary so we tried it first; there wasn't a problem with the chimney but too much air between the top of the chock and the cliff. Next we tried the side route, easily ascending the first five metres. The next several metres, however, were too exposed to risk in our isolated situation. Perhaps if we had a rope and a rockclimber to belay us up...

We had two more options and two days left to find our way into the heart of the canyon. A study of the cliffs at the top of a steep slope on the western side revealed a gully cutting through them. This gave us access to a ridge alongside the canyon. We could see our callitris on the top of the range and the water-bleached rocks of the gorge below as it emerged from its journey around the huge, red buttress. However, the slope beneath us was far too steep and unstable to attempt.

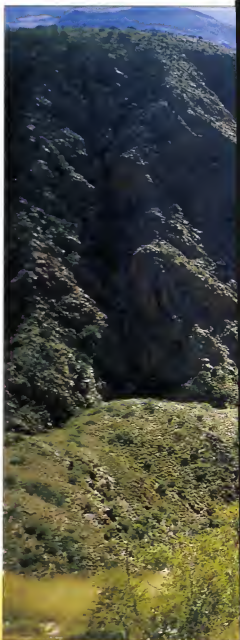
Now we had only one day and one possibility left: an entry from the eastern side. Once again a gully gave us access through the cliffline to a spur from where a steep descent led into a side creek. Suddenly, almost too easily, we were there, above the unclimbed chockstone in the flat section of the gorge below the red buttress.

A hundred metres upstream the gorge narrowed dramatically as it took a sharp swing to the left, seeming to go into the bowels of the mountain in its loop around the buttress. We straddled a couple of small pools and the gorge swung to the right,

‘You’ve got the scramble rope?’ I asked John l’Ons at Canberra airport. ‘No, I thought you were bringing it,’ was the reply. ‘I’m not joking.’ ‘Nor am I!’

We stopped off at a hardware store in Alice Springs and found a nylon clothes-line; not ideal but we thought it would get us up the climb at the bottom end of the canyon. John romped up the cliff (probably a first ascent—a rather awkward grade-7 or 8) and belayed the rest of the party until we came to one member who as a youth had had a nasty fall while climbing. She just couldn't get started.

‘I can't do it,’ she finally wailed after many attempts. ‘You can,’ replied John, ‘and you will!’ And she did. Ever since, we’ve called





No doubt all this country is known and named by Aboriginal people but even if someone has been there before there's a special exhilaration in finding an interesting feature yourself.

I recently met a man who spent three days in the 1960s finding Hugh Gorge. He still sounded excited about it! It's still a wonderful gorge to visit, but a trip today

along the Hugh Gorge section of the Larapinta Trail couldn't compare with discovering it after a lengthy search.

The exploration of another interesting canyon had its genesis in 1989. We had climbed a peak above our camp and were admiring the panoramic view. The range, only one peak wide where we stood, broadened out to our east to a double spine with a gently sloping

red cliffs. We stood above a long line of upper cliffs, unable to descend but able to see the jagged, red pinnacles which formed a gateway to the inner gorge and suggested a name, 'Portals Canyon'.

Every spur that might have taken us down into the gorge ended in cliffs, forcing us to backtrack to the saddle at the top of the valley. After a fairly uneventful stretch down-



### *Grahame Muller has a closer look at the elusive Portals Canyon.*

upland valley separating the two ridges. Unlike the Canyon of Defiance, this was shown on the map as quite a significant creek but it would also take a few days to reach.

After planning but failing to visit this valley on some intervening trips, we had our first success in 1999. On a day-trip from a base camp on the south side of the range, we climbed to the top and gained our first close view. The 'gentle valley' was deceptive—it soon turned into a gorge which cut deep into the range, backed by a ridge of steep,

stream we were turned back at an impassable drop but did get a closer look at the Portals, one of which turned out to be a tottery column of rock with a gorge on either side of it. If we were going to gain access to the most interesting section, we would have to enter the canyon from below.

Circumnavigating this section of the range took us two days. We spent a morning slogging down a dry creek that ran parallel with the range before turning into a convenient gap providing access to the northern side.

After passing a few filthy, cattle-polluted mud holes, we were relieved to find some clean water for the night in a side gorge inaccessible to stock.

It was a dry year and we were a bit worried about the water situation at the mouth

## Water

The key to extended trips in the Macdonnells is finding drinkable water. This isn't as difficult as you might imagine, even in a fairly dry season. The ranges soak up any rainfall, which then emerges as springs. Many of the gorges in the main range contain water, usually at the break of slope between hill and plain. Often there will be a polluted pool below a rocky bar at the entrance to a gorge but you may find clean water upstream above the bar. Pools can sometimes be found in the small gorges in the lower hills that run parallel with the main range.

After rain, you may find water in sandy hollows in some creek-beds; indeed, the Aboriginal people used to dig for water here. In my experience, stagnant water soon develops a noxious-looking green scum. One such pool is Birthday Waterhole in Stuart Pass, on the Larapinta Trail. It has the added disadvantage of being badly polluted by cattle. Yet less than two kilometres away up a side gorge is a little-known fresh spring (although I must admit I once saw a cow-pat in it, after I'd filled my water-bag for the night).

If you want to walk off the beaten track I suggest using known waterholes as base camps while finding new water sources for future trips. Then you won't have to weigh yourself down carrying gallons of water.

of Portals Canyon. When we reached it early the next afternoon we could scarcely believe our eyes, a series of crystal-clear pools dropped down through the bedrock and over a rocky bar to the best camp-site I've ever seen in the Macdonnells—large, flat, surrounded by beautiful trees and shrubs and only metres from the water. It has an ambience to which photos don't do justice but which fills the weary walker with a sense of peace and contentment.

We passed a ferny pool upstream before the canyon walls closed in, forcing us to remove our boots to wade through a series of dark, icy pools. The water deepened and by the time we reached a short, compulsory swim before a high chockstone there were only two of us left. The cold water seemed to go to Grahame's head. 'Better than those bloody shitty little Blue Mountains canyons!' he exclaimed, although he did admit later that perhaps this was a little extreme. He was the only member of the party who climbed the chockstone (I wasn't prepared to try it in bare feet) and continued on a little further, but still far short of the Portals. I vowed to return with sand-shoes, thermals and a rope.

Which was exactly what we did in 2000. Properly prepared, we were through the compulsory swims and up the chockstone in a trice despite the water being deeper after two major floods earlier in the year.

After a few more deep pools, we broke out into the middle section of Portals Gorge where we spent half an hour thawing out in the sunshine.

We continued up this hidden valley cut deep into the mountain range. It offered one delight after another: cascades of pools in small, rusty-red gorges; flat stretches of white pebbles and pale grey bedrock; tantalising sinewy, shadowy side gorges; dainty ghost

seemed unclimbable but a wrestle with the rock revealed its weaker points. We wriggled up beside the chock and then scaled a near-vertical wall above it.

The orange walls again closed in around us and it really seemed as though we might make our way right through, beneath the Portals themselves. But the gorge



*'Dainty ghost gums with their powdery white limbs flung out against glowing orange rock'—Bruce Baldwin takes it easy in Portals Canyon.*

gums with their powdery white limbs flung out against glowing orange rock walls; vistas of the unbroken cliffs hundreds of metres above us at the top of the range and of tottering red pinnacles looming dangerously over the creek-bed. At first glance a large, high chockstone in front of a waterfall

turned a corner and became a deep, enclosed pool topped by a smooth, near-vertical chute curving away out of sight; it was only a short stretch of canyon but abseil gear would be needed to enter it and that would only be possible from the top end. Like the Canyon of Defiance, this



## Planning

When is the best time of year to visit the Macdonnells? Before June and after August it's likely to be hot and fly infested. During the intervening months, if you're lucky, you'll have fine, warm days and frosty nights cold enough to kill off annoying insects. But don't leave your rain jacket behind as a series of squalls can sweep in from the north-west, bringing cold weather and downpours of rain, or even sleet on the highest tops.

What maps are available? The *Hermannsburg* and *Alice Springs* 1:250 000 are surprisingly useful though you may need a magnifying glass to read them. AUSLIG produces 1:100 000 black and white dye-line maps. The 1:50 000 *Royal Australian Survey Corps* maps cover some areas. Many walkers use aerial photos.

canyon seemed determined to guard its inner sanctum from prying human eyes.

There are many more interesting canyons in the Macdonnells but my latest goal is to reach a high, isolated peak, which although probably not too hard to climb is difficult to access. I'd noticed it on the map, seen it in the far distance, even flown past it in a small plane, but August 2000 was the first time I managed to get a decent look at it. From a base camp in an unnamed gorge, one cloudy afternoon Pat and I set out to

*John Thwaite and Grahame Muller on a ridge above the Canyon of Defiance.*

explore a side creek and possibly climb the range for a view over the other side.

Pat's knee was playing up and I had a hard time persuading her to continue (most unlike Pat, who usually leaps around the

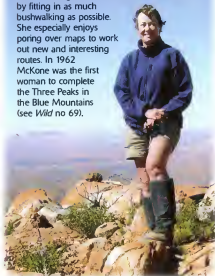
hills like a gazelle). 'Just this next bump', I kept on saying, hoping it would be the last. Finally we reached Pat's 'absolutely no further' top from where we could see the peak's rounded summit poking up beyond a few hundred metres of almost flat ridgetop. So 'absolutely no further' became 'just this last bit' and soon we stood at the edge of a deep valley.

Below us a white creek-bed wound across the valley, a magical path to our 'Peak Alone' standing surrounded by shafts of sunlight that had just broken through the clouds. The mountain rose up to form an almost perfect cone, its white quartz sides traced with rusty veins and dotted with native pines. Then the spotlight moved on and turned our attention to other sections of the range which broadened out into a complex roller-coaster of rugged ridges riven by steep gorges. Finally time and the fierce wind drove us back to camp.

The Arrente myths describe how the Macdonnell Ranges were created by ancestral caterpillars—a strange image until you stand on top of the main range and see the hills crawling in parallel lines far into the distance then clumping together into twisted knots. And in those hundreds of kilometres there's still plenty of exploring to be done, far away from the Larapinta Trail. 🐛

### Meg McKone

has been a keen bushwalker since childhood. She is making the most of her retirement by fitting in as much bushwalking as possible. She especially enjoys poring over maps to work out new and interesting routes. In 1962 McKone was the first woman to complete the Three Peaks in the Blue Mountains (see *Wild* no 69).







# Footloose in GREENLAND

*Grant Dixon explores the world's largest island*



## ARCTIC ADVENTURES

THE GREENLAND ICE-CAP IS 2500 KILOMETRES long and up to three kilometres thick in places. It is drained by thousands of valley glaciers and covers 85 per cent of this huge island. However, as Greenland is the world's largest island (2.4 million square kilometres) much ice-free land remains. This coastal strip is widest in the west, extending around 200 kilometres inland from Sisimiut, whereas in the east ice stretches close to the coast in many areas.

The most accessible parts of Greenland are in the east and west around the latitude of the Arctic Circle, and on the south-west coast. The main population centres (primarily Inuit) are in these regions, but crowds are not an issue. Less than 50 000 people live in Kitaa (the western side of Greenland) and the population of the entire east coastline—Tunu, or 'the other side'—is a mere 3500 people, comprising two towns and several villages.

Our approach to Greenland was spectacular, sea ice and scattered rocky islets appearing below as we descended out of the cloud towards the gravel runway at Kulusuk. I had to wait here for my flight to West Greenland but escaped the quarry-like surrounds of the small terminal for a few hours and wandered to Kulusuk. Out of sight and sound of the air terminal two kilometres away this village of wooden houses is perched above a bay full of small icebergs. I sat and listened to the pop and crash of icebergs bobbing in the bay and the distant howling of chained sled dogs—archetypal Greenland.

The ice-filled fiords, jagged peaks and bare, brown islands of the Ammassalik region (to which I would return in three weeks) soon gave way to the gleaming white ice-cap as we flew west. Stretching to the horizon and contrasting with the clear, deep-blue sky, the ice-cap surface at first appeared featureless. An extensive network of channels and jewel-like turquoise pools of melt water appeared, then arcuate crevasse lines and moraine bands could be seen as we approached the western margin. Descending past the ice boundary, there was a brief glimpse of rolling landscape with sand, grass and low shrubs before the plane landed at Kangerlussuaq.

Kangerlussuaq is a former US airbase at the head of the 160 kilometre long fiord for which it is named. It was built in 1941 as a refuelling stop for flights to wartime Europe and was also used during the Cold War. Architecturally and climatically, it is unlike any of Greenland's

*Grant Dixon appreciates the view from Arnaq Qallunaq over Maligiaq Fiord, West Greenland. All photos by the author*

other permanent settlements as it is far inland, giving it a stable climate with warm, dry summers and very cold winters.

After visiting the edge of the Greenland ice-cap—a mere 25 kilometres east—I planned to turn west again and trek to the coast; a distance of 200 kilometres that would take around two weeks to cover. My route from Kangerlussuaq to the coast at Sisimiut would follow some of the Arctic Circle Trek. This is Greenland's most popular long walk (although not particularly popular!) and it is mostly trackless. Late June is quite early in the summer season so I didn't expect to meet many other walkers.

Russell Glacier is a small and broken glacier with serried ranks of seracs extending up towards the great, white mass of the ice-cap. Its terminal face is a vertical blue-white ice-cliff grounded on an ice-smoothed pavement where the convoluted folds of the ancient rocks can be seen amongst the scattered ice blocks fallen from the glacier above. The glacier gives rise to a turbid river which flows west. I followed the river past splashes of pink Nivarsia (Rose Bay, the national flower of Greenland) on the sandy valley floor. Walking across terraces blanketed with yellow grass and prostrate willow or birch thickets, I came across a musk ox grazing. These shaggy animals with their heavy horns look almost prehistoric and are surprisingly small. After a brief meeting of eyes the shy animal wandered away.

Back in Kangerlussuaq I bought supplies for 12 days and hitched westwards, a passing jeep saving a few hours of plodding. The walk from the road head was straightforward initially, past grey-blue lakes surrounded by ice-smoothed rocky knolls and bluffs. However, later on the hilly terrain, marshy flats, low thickets, and my heavy pack combined to make it feel surprisingly strenuous.

Clouds of insects swarmed during the warm, still day; mostly small flies that didn't bite. I hoped they were not an omen of things to come: the mosquito is one of the smallest of Greenland's wildlife, but easily the most numerous during a brief period in midsummer. I had hoped that my June trip would be early enough to avoid them.

I camped on an exposed knoll above a lake rimmed with the fluffy heads of cotton-grass, hoping any breeze would disperse the insects. I eventually retired to the protection of my tent and tried to sleep despite the daylight. At Arctic Circle latitudes the sun hardly sets during summer, and it is not dark anywhere in Greenland between late May and mid-July.

Misty rain and a cold breeze accompanied me the next day as I wandered through an undulating landscape; at least there weren't any insects. Ankle-high birch and willow displayed spring growth in places but many areas were still dead after eight months of being buried beneath snow. I crossed several rocky ridges with scattered boulders dumped as the ice-cap retreated inland several thousand years ago, and descended to camp beside Amitsorsuaq Lake.

The morning's stunning reflections soon gave way to a cold wind and showers. It

seemed a long 20 kilometres along the shore to the far end of the lake. For much of the day I walked bent forward, gazing downward, appreciating the delights of the ground cover. Small cream and purple wild flowers added colour to the mosaic of yellow grass and green mosses, which sometimes grew

high fall to the far side of the lake, but the mountains are rounded, abraded by the advance and retreat of the ice-cap.

I descended to Kangerluatsiaarsuaq, a large bay with an extensive beach, but the temperature and breeze were not conducive to sun-baking. After a quick lunch in the lee of



*The 'ice-filled fiords, jagged peaks and bare, brown islands of the Ammassalik region' as seen looking east from a 1000 metre peak on Ammassalik Island.*

over the occasional shed caribou antler. The calls of small birds, ducks on the lake and the cries of falcons, invisible amongst the rock bluffs above, completed the sensory experience.

A broad, marshy valley leads from the far end of Amitsorsuaq to an even larger lake, beyond which the terrain becomes more mountainous. Smooth bluffs some 500 metres

a boulder I headed away from the shore and steeply up on to a dissected rocky plateau made of parallel rocky ridges with elongated lakes and tarns filling the intervening gulches. This was the first extensive section of higher country I had traversed on the trek so I searched for a spot to camp and take in the view. Now more than 60 kilometres away, the ice-cap could be

glimpsed gleaming beyond the many lakes and hills to the east.

The still and clear morning came with clouds of mosquitoes so, despite the radiant warmth of the sun, I remained well covered while eating breakfast and packing up; it was either that or liberal applications of insect repellent.

Once walking it was generally possible to strip off somewhat and even walk in shorts.

After a steep descent from the plateau, I wound my way across the Itinneq valley flats to a river. The deep, slow-flowing stream drains the large Tasersuaq Lake to Maligiaq Fiord, the head of which now glistened in

the distance. A single, battered canoe abandoned on the river bank provided a way to cross the river and remain dry. However, solo walking has its pitfalls—it is desirable to leave the canoe on the south bank as most walkers come from this direction. I crossed the stream in the canoe and left my rucksack on the far bank, then brought the canoe back to the south bank and swam across the river. The water was refreshing to say the least!

Heading west once more, I followed the river bank and a series of terraces to camp overlooking the head of Maligiaq Fiord. This is a salt-water inlet but it would be a couple more days before I could gaze from the coastal mountains out across Davis Strait, beyond which lies Canada's Baffin Island. Camped near me that evening were the only other walkers I met during the trek, four Danish students who shared the large trout they'd caught with me. It was a tasty change from my otherwise bland fare.

Next morning I traversed a rising terrace above the inlet, then climbed to a pass behind the rocky knoll of Arnaq Qallunaq (the Danish woman) to a stunning view. The clear air and bright sun made the landscape colours seem almost surreal—blue lakes were set amongst grey rock whalebacks and the green birch and willow shrubbery, with the calm blue-green sea below. Descending past the lakes, I ambled across the slopes and amongst banded gneissic rock outcrops before climbing to camp by a lake overlooking the fiord.

## Greenland



“I sat and listened to the pop and crash of icebergs bobbing in the bay and the distant howling of chained sled dogs—archetypal Greenland.”



The day had remained still and it was quite warm by late afternoon; the mosquitoes were revved up. The only options were to sit outside overdressed or hide in the tent, which was almost as hot. When out photographing later that day, it was hard to concentrate on composition due to the whine of mosquitoes in my ears and numerous black specks dancing in front of the lens.

Mornings were the best time of day—cool, often breezy, with clear air and far fewer mosquitoes. Early the next day I headed up into more rugged terrain. The climate is wetter in these coastal mountains and the vegetation changes accordingly; willow scrub, herb banks and moss beds become more common. While walking is slower, every rise or bluff hides another impressive view making it constantly interesting. I crested a broken ridge and disturbed an Arctic fox on a ledge just below, its dark coat contrasting with a light, bushy tail. It stared golden-eyed at me for several minutes before bounding away.

I reached the edge of the coastal escarpment suddenly. A large lake was cradled far below and the view extended across Ikertooq, the mouth of the fiord, to Davis Strait beyond. A steep descent and sidle above the lake brought me to the shores of the narrow Imartuninnguag Channel. A local family had set up a fishing camp here, with split fish spread out to dry on the nearby rock slabs. We had a sort of conversation over coffee and biscuits but there weren't many shared English words.

Small, colourful wooden houses climb the steep, rocky slope of an elongated island just across the narrow channel. I hitched a lift across to this tiny settlement of Sarfanguit (the little channel) in a fishing dinghy and treated myself to an ice cream at the village shop and a few luxuries for the night's dinner before returning to the mainland and wandering a bit further to camp and enjoy them.

Climbing steeply away from the coast again, a gully opened to a lake-floored basin. After another ascent and a barren pass, I descended through a moss-carpeted basin, then down beside a canyon where deep snowdrifts lay in the shaded depths. The blue waters of Uqtoqaat Inlet glistened below.

Jumping from rock to rock, I made a dry crossing of a stream just below the cascading outlet of a large lake. Lunch in the sun was pleasant but the spectacular cirrus clouds that filled the sky did not give me confidence in the good weather lasting for long. By the time I had climbed to the second pass of the day it was grey and cold.

I camped behind the narrow beach of yet another lake and then headed westward

again. Above the waters of Kangerluarsuk Tulleq Fiord I traversed a coastal terrace, then up to the long Qerortusup Majoriaa pass.

Sisimiut was near—the swaths of broken shrubbery caused by locals using their snow machines as the snow melted were evidence of this. I followed a valley beneath the ramparts of Nasasaaq, the distinctive 784 metre peak that overlooks Sisimiut, but the town itself is hidden until one is virtually upon it.

Sisimiut is 75 kilometres north of the Arctic Circle, the northernmost town with an ice-free port year-round and the most southern town in West Greenland with dog-sled traffic. The town is the home of 5000 people and

islands provide many trekking opportunities. I planned a circular trek around the 40 kilometre wide Ammassalik Island. The rolling, ice-smoothed landscape of the west of the island has many cliffs and ravines, giving way to the jagged, higher (less than 1000 metre) peaks of the north and east. The vegetation here is sparse and tundra-like and there are extensive areas of rocky uplands.

Heading out of town I passed the cemetery—an array of freshly painted, white crosses decorated with bright, plastic flowers—and continued up Flower Valley, dotted with its own patches of floral colour. In the Ammassalik region vegetation gives way to rock and



*The weird, weathered shapes of stranded icebergs in Tasilaq Inlet, East Greenland.*

probably as many sled dogs—the howls of these dogs, chained up for the summer, are a constant soundtrack in the town. Clusters of coloured, box-like multistorey buildings vie with wooden houses for level space above the small harbour.

East Greenland is different from the west both culturally and linguistically. Inuit people migrated here later and the few European settlers arrived more than a century ago. The traditional Inuit activities of sealing and hunting are still widely practised (albeit using Western technology) and play a major role in providing meat. Tasilaq ('the place which is almost like a lake'), situated on Ammassalik Island, is the largest town on the east coast with a population of 1800 people. The ubiquitous, colourful wooden houses climb the slopes around the wide, open fiord surrounded by rocky mountains for which the town is named.

The ice-cap lies close to the coast in the Ammassalik region, its glaciers drain to the sea and calve numerous icebergs. An ice-free peninsula 75 kilometres long and nearby

scree at much lower altitudes than in West Greenland; soon after passing a green fringed lake I entered terrain of brown and grey. Climbing higher, a lake basin still contained drifts of winter snow and large slabs of broken ice were adrift in the lake. White and blues entered my immediate world.

I waded through deep snow across a pass and set up my tent on a rock slab beside a small tarn, perched overlooking the Sermilik Fiord. This massive fiord is fed by many large glaciers draining from the ice-cap and dotted with icebergs. The ice-cap itself is visible beyond. I admired the view from my tent as the evening progressed (clouds of blackflies made it less pleasant outside), the sun finally dipping below the mountains to the north-west (albeit for only a couple of hours) at 1 am.

The next morning I descended rock slabs on to the Mittivakkat Glacier, a short cut to avoid descending further and traversing rugged terrain near the coast. The glacier surface was smooth and crevasse free but instep crampons made the going easier. After around



three kilometres I neared the far side of the glacier where an ice-cliff fell directly into a glacial lake. I eventually outflanked it by climbing further up the glacier and descending a steep snow-slope.

I scrambled over loose moraine ridges, sporadic, green cushion-plants and pink flowers

dry-footed. Sitting on the far bank, teary-eyed, as my feet painfully re-warmed after their dip I reflected on the sense of replacing boots and socks with sandals for the crossing.

A warm morning and sweaty climb brought me to a pass leading back east. Snow still

After lunch and a siesta, I headed up towards the nearest rocky peak. Tedious snow plogging eventually gave way to rocky sections on a narrowing ridge; the final scramble was quite airy. The isolated summit fell away precipitously to the east, providing panoramic views. I was now high enough for the ice-cap to form the horizon to the west. Eastwards, beyond a frozen inlet, icebergs floated in Ammassalik Fjord and sea ice choked the channels between the rocky islands. Several glacier tongues descended from another range of jagged peaks across the valley and I could hear the roar of the glacial river that drained them far below.

The stable weather continued as I descended a complex series of terraces and slabs of banded rock. After following a series of lakes down the valley and climbing high to pass bluffs in places, I eventually crossed a cascading stream to the shore of a large lake, Qorlortorq So. Lush vegetation lined the stream, bright against the surrounding grey rock, but the clouds of mosquitoes in this sheltered spot discouraged lingering. I flushed a couple of snow buntings (fat ground birds) from their rocky shelters.

I camped early, on top of a bluff above the lake, eager to take in the surroundings and the still weather. Scattered tarns and glacial boulders decorated the surrounding slabs. The lake below mirrored the mountains opposite. But the mosquitoes! Relaxing outside the tent required a head net, which did little to enhance the view.

My final days were quite leisurely. I climbed a high, bare ridge beneath another rocky peak, but balmy weather and deep, soft snow made sitting in the sun more attractive than plugging higher. My route to the shore of Tasilaq Inlet entailed a pleasant descent of grassy slopes carpeted with pink, purple and yellow wild flowers but ended with another painfully cold ford.

On my final night I camped above a small bay at the head of the inlet where a number of small icebergs were grounded, driven ashore by southerly winds. The thawing icebergs, intricately sculpted with flutings, small arches and undercut rims, shone gleaming white and deep blue in the sun



*Not a place for lingering. The terminal ice-cliff of Russell Glacier rears up from the banded gneiss bedrock in West Greenland.*

## Grant Dixon

works part time for the Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service and has spent much of his free time exploring and photographing remote parts of the world. However, he is always drawn home to the wild, natural landscapes of South-west Tasmania.



providing colour. The flat outwash plains between rocky ribs were attractive but the saturated silt between the braided stream-channels sometimes contained patches of quicksand.

I descended a steep, bouldery slope to a stream that drained another tongue of the Mittivakkat Glacier. It was too wide to ford

covered the frozen lake in the pass, hiding the shore line and forcing me to traverse the soft slopes above to eliminate any chance of falling through the ice. Taking advantage of the good weather, I climbed higher up bouldery slopes and rock slabs, then plugged steps in soft snow to set my tent on a high shelf below a range of jagged, rocky peaks.

the next morning.

I waited for low tide and walked easily around the shore back to Tasilaq town. Grounded icebergs stood off the various gravelly beaches, yellow flowers dotted the bright green vegetation and a slight breeze meant that the mosquitoes took a rest for my final walk in Greenland. ●

ISLAND RETREAT

# HINCHINBRO

*Catherine Lawson paddles around a tropical paradise*



# OK Escape

**HINCHINBROOK ISLAND RECLINES LIKE A SLEEPING dragon, a mist-covered, mangrove-fringed monster with a jagged spine of rugged peaks. Sandwiched between the Great Barrier Reef and the ancient, tropical rainforests of the Cardwell Range, Hinchinbrook is Australia's largest island National Park. It appears tantalisingly close from the mainland; however, four kilometres of crocodile-infested waters separate Hinchinbrook from civilisation.**

Accessible to boaters, hikers and sea kayakers, Hinchinbrook Island is a raw and inhabitable place where secluded beaches and turbulent bays are pounded by an almost constant south-easterly swell.

For self-sufficient sea kayakers seeking exhilarating paddling, encounters with dugongs and sea turtles, and balmy nights spent camped under swaying coconut palms this is as good as it gets.

*we loitered amongst the green sea turtles. As the tide dropped, we edged in close to the mangroves beneath Mt Pitt to spook blue-spotted stingrays and watch them shoot away through the clear water.*

Paddling adventures in the far north are frequently interrupted by rogue salt-water crocodiles, cyclonic monsoonal seas and the deadly box jellyfish and irukandji stingers that plague the tropical waters for more than half

*Cloud obscures the view as the author paddles past Mt Bowen, Hinchinbrook Island's tallest peak.*  
All photos by David Bristow

## Hinchinbrook fact file

### The trip

Allow seven days to paddle Hinchinbrook's east coast between the mainland towns of Lucinda and Cardwell, or on to Mission Beach. Pack plenty of food, a fuel stove (no fires permitted), warm clothing, a first-aid kit, map, local tide chart and insect repellent. Freshwater creeks provide excellent water.

### Camping

National Park camp-sites (\$4 a person, a night) must be booked in advance on the Web site at [www.epa.qld.gov.au](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au) where you can also download a local tide chart.

### Getting there

By air: take a flight to Townsville or Cairns and a bus to Mission Beach. Coral Sea Kayaks hires single- and double expedition sea kayaks (including safety equipment and spare paddles) from \$50 to \$90 a day. They can also transfer you and your kayak to launch sites at Lucinda (\$100 a trip) or Cardwell (\$50 a trip). Phone (07) 4068 9154 or email [coralseakayaking@bigpond.com](mailto:coralseakayaking@bigpond.com)

By road: those bringing their own kayaks can launch from either Lucinda or Cardwell. Paddle both ways or travel one way and arrange a car shuttle or catch a bus back to your starting-point.

the year. The good news is that from May to October nature cuts sea kayakers some slack. With the arrival of winter the stingers and cyclones disappear, crocodiles tend to head up river out of the open sea, and the cooler, less humid temperatures make for cosy camping and comfortable paddling.

The one unchanging variable is the weather. The seas off Hinchinbrook's exposed east coast remain notoriously unpredictable, trans-



*Landing in paradise at beautiful Nina Bay.*

forming from innocuous and glassy water into steep, terrifying peaks in the blink of an eye.

The Bureau of Meteorology issued a strong-wind warning as my partner and I prepared to launch our heavily-laden sea kayaks from the sleepy seaside town of Cardwell but we were undeterred. Having paddled and sailed in the area for more than three years, we had come to appreciate that around Hinchinbrook, things were always either much better or significantly worse than predicted. True to form, despite dark skies and dire warnings the first day's paddle across Missionary Bay was interrupted by nothing more than the gentle 'phuff' of sea turtles surfacing, and a solitary dolphin fishing the shallows off Hecate Point.

Our expedition sea kayaks were filled with ten days' worth of food, fuel and camping gear; I was looking forward to lessening the load as we ate up and strengthened *en route*. Ten days are a long time to endure



### Hinchinbrook Island

Scale: 0 5 10 km  
 Road  
 Thorabone track  
 Route  
 Not for navigation.



dried noodles so we had packed a bounty of tropical fruits and vegetables that weighed heavily on my first-day arms.

Launching from the beach opposite our Cardwell home, our estimated nine-day journey would take us around the island's mangrove-fringed north-western shores and down the turbulent east coast to George Point. Most paddlers make a one-way journey from south to north but we decided that after paddling

trek upstream for a drink. At dusk we enjoyed the other reward for reaching Macushla, when we sat on the sand and watched the sun set over the sea—not an easy thing to experience on the east coast.

The sunset was a perfect end to our first day on the water but it heralded the arrival of vast, hungry clouds of mosquitoes. While the problem is less severe on the breezy east coast, at Macushla it was unbearable.



into the predominantly south-easterly seas down the east coast, the ride back home would be swift. Our instincts were right. While we spent six days travelling south, it would take just three days to ride the crests of a roaring swell on the return leg.

Day one on the water presented the perfect conditions for dawdling—nothing more challenging than a long, slow paddle beneath sunny skies. Having learned to make the most of perfect conditions around the island, we loitered amongst the green sea turtles. As the tide dropped, we edged in close to the mangroves beneath Mt Pitt to spook blue-spotted stingrays and watch them shoot away through the clear water. We lingered over the sea-grass beds that carpet Missionary Bay's dugong sanctuary but had no luck sighting the silent sea cows. Only 1700 dugongs are estimated to live on the entire east coast of Australia, so dugong encounters are rare.

Macushla camping ground was a welcome sight at the end of the day, spoiling us with facilities absent elsewhere on the island: a gas barbecue, sheltered picnic table and a composting toilet. There was even a wriggler-free water tank so we didn't have to

The tent was impossibly humid when closed but if we opened the door the mosses plagued us, happily gnawing through the lathers of tropical-strength repellent that we applied continuously throughout the night. We spent the long hours of darkness alternating between equally uncomfortable zipper-up, zipper-down tent scenarios until I couldn't stand it any longer and abandoned the tent to coil up on the picnic table. All was fine until it began to rain. At dawn I was walking the beach, begging the sun to rise so we could get going. Suffice to say it took a lot of strong coffee to soothe two cranky campers the next morning.

Launching into glassy seas, we paddled round the protection of Cape Richards to the island's north and smacked head first into a 20–25 knot south-easterly. It turned out to be the start of things to come. The wind continued unabated at 20–30 knots or more for the remainder of our time on the island's exposed east coast, at times firing on us like bullets that exploded down over the island's rugged range.

On the long, weary ride over South Shepherds Bay, the wind and swell were more of an enduring inconvenience and we were distracted from our discomfort by dozens of enormous, green sea turtles. A barnacled head would bob just ahead of us until the turtle caught a glimpse of the approaching kayaks and splashed back to safety beneath the waves.

Our exhausting day was extended unnecessarily by the fact that we couldn't find our camp-site. Expecting to find the usual camping ground facilities (toilets, water tanks, perhaps a picnic table), we paddled past the sea-kayaker camp at Sunset Beach and were then forced to keep going to Banshee Bay. While toilets and tables do exist at some of the more heavily frequented hiker camps, the sea-kayaker camps are merely beaches with space for a tent or two above the high-tide mark. It's refreshing to know that the human impact on much of the island is so limited that toilets and cleared camp-sites are not necessary.

Despite the extra kilometres of paddling, Banshee Bay is a magical spot. On the beach we found only each other's footprints and our windy camp-site beneath casuarina trees was made comfortable with some crafty beach-combers' driftwood furniture. We collected bits and pieces of timber washed ashore by the tide and constructed rudimentary chairs and tables from old milk crates and stray planks, then promptly passed out in the tent.

*Cruising into tranquil Nina Bay revived our Robinson Crusoe fantasies. A perfect arch, the white beach is fringed with coconut palms and the dramatic summit of Mt Bowen towers over it.*

It was surprising that the wind slackened as we pulled out of the bay early the next morning, nudging the kayaks along Ramsay Bay's eight kilometres of yellow beach. The paddling was effortless and I settled into a zen-like paddling rhythm, mesmerised by the stunning backdrop of the peaks of Mt Bowen (1142 metres), the Thumb, the Prophet and Nina Peak, presenting a dark and dramatic image that was breathtaking.

Towards the end of Ramsay Bay we were jolted back to reality by our first human encounter—a dozen fresh-looking bushwalkers heading off along the 32 kilometre Thorsbome Track. After two magical days spent

in solitude on the water, it was a shock to realise we were not alone.

Cruising into tranquil Nina Bay revived our Robinson Crusoe fantasies. A perfect arch, the white beach is fringed with coconut palms and the dramatic summit of Mt Bowen towers over it. It was rugged, beautiful and utterly deserted. The only down side was that the tide was on its way out, so we had to haul our heavy boats a long way up the beach.

Protected from the south-easterly winds, Nina Bay provided a quiet sanctuary for the night. When we launched the next day and attempted to round tiny Agnes Island, we found ourselves fighting a 30-knot wind and a two metre swell. Edging across the shallow isthmus that links Agnes Island to the shore, the retreating tide revealed a reef of jagged coral bobbies. We were in danger of being washed against them. We dared not venture any further so in absolute frustration we turned round and headed into a contrastingly serene bay.

The unnamed cove south of Little Ramsay Bay was our favourite camp. It was free of mossies, the perfectly clear creek shaded by paper-barks, and we welcomed the opportunity to dry out our gear and explore the neighbouring headlands on foot.

Anxiety awoke us early the next morning; we were up and packed before the coffee finished brewing. Keen to face the job ahead, we pushed off and into a messy cauldron of white water. Enormous whirlpools whipped around us, caused by violent, two metre swells that rebounded off the island's sheer granite cliffs to our right and doubled back on us so that waves came from all directions, sometimes simultaneously. The scenery went unnoticed as the task of steadying my kayak, struggling to make headway against the wind and keeping a lid on my nerves demanded my complete concentration.

Time is sometimes difficult to measure in rough sea conditions; seconds become stretched by adrenalin. Two long, exhausting hours passed before we nudged into Zoe Bay and set our sights on her magical, peak-ringed amphitheatre. I had been waiting to see this beautiful sight for some time: two sapphire-hued, freshwater creeks border a brilliant white beach, giving way to an emerald rainforest. High above, a waterfall trickles over a wedge of granite.

An easy, 20-minute stroll behind the dunes led to the deep, clear waterhole beneath Zoe Falls. The promise of a freshwater bath was too much to resist. Walking to the top of the falls, we bathed high above the world in smooth rock pools, sunning ourselves on

warm granite slabs and taking in the expansive view.

At low tide, we sat on the sand and waited for the onslaught of Zoe Bay's unusual crab armies. With indescant, opal-like bodies, the tiny soldier crabs surfaced on cue and scurried about in their chaotic battalions, digging

supplies. Despite carrying provisions for ten full days, I had underestimated just how demanding the paddling would be. On previous coastal trips we had been able to supplement our rations with bush tucker collected along the way. Green coconuts had been gathered for milk, grated to boil



*The expansive view from the top of Zoe Falls.*

their bright blue bodies into the sand when we approached. It was a remarkable and unexpected afternoon's entertainment; when bad weather kept us land-locked at Zoe Bay for two luscious days, we didn't mind a bit.

Our only concerns were the unrelenting poor weather and our rapidly diminishing

with rice and cut into slithers that we toasted and seasoned with spices. We had gathered wild oysters, harvested bush lemons and spent entire afternoons cracking tropical almonds that we roasted on the camp-fire. As we were within the National Park on this trip, we were subsisting solely on our supplies.

At Zoe Bay on day six the cookie- and chocolate-bar supplies were getting alarmingly low.

We had to keep moving. When we finally left Zoe Bay, the seas were predictably demanding. We had anticipated that rounding Hillock Point—the island's most eastern point—would be the toughest stretch with the weather at its worst. The deafening sound of waves thundering off the high sea-cliffs made communication impossible, and the rain-clouds that descended upon us turned our grey world surreal.

We could just make out the distant buzz of a motor somewhere in the gloom, but with the swell shielding the horizon it wasn't until it was almost on top of us that we saw the small aluminium dinghy.

It was headed straight towards us and was only 200 metres away when we at last made ourselves visible by furiously waving our bright-yellow paddles. Shocked expressions flashed across the faces of three rain-soaked fishermen as they passed close by. We wondered aloud what the hell they were doing out on a day like this. They were probably thinking the same about us.

As we surfed on to the sand at Sunken Reef Bay, the rain paused and a finger of light broke through the clouds to illuminate the little beach. We snacked in the sunshine

With black clouds looming, we relaunched into the dark mêlée and prepared to do battle with our familiar foe. The swell carried us on at double time and by staying at least a kilometre from the coast the effect of the rebounding seas was kept to a manageable level.

Arriving at our favourite no-name cove at low tide, the kayaks skirted just centimetres above a reef of colourful coral bobbies and darting parrot-fish that hadn't been visible on our previous visit. As I anxiously searched for a passage through the reef, trying not to scrape the coral and the underbelly of my plastic boat, I turned just in time to watch a sea eagle snare his slithering dinner with one talon.

We found ourselves a table on the pool deck and splurged on gourmet fries and salt-and-pepper squid. I can't begin to explain how exquisite that first ice-cold beer tasted, but I do know that the second one was almost as good. With only a few kilometres left, we paddled slowly to camp with broad smiles and fuzzy heads and spent the night reliving our most exciting kayaking adventure to date.

We didn't see any evidence that the sun actually dawned on our final day of paddling. However, only a half-day paddle separated us from a hot shower, so we pushed into the thick rain-clouds with gusto. The clouds met the sea, leaving us paddling blind, navigating solely by the direction of the slight



## Catherine Lawson

Based in far north Queensland, Catherine Lawson took up sea kayaking four years ago. When not sharing her paddling adventures with dolphins, mania rays, dugongs and plenty of crocodiles, she writes a weekly cooking column for the newspaper.



and contemplated paddling a further 11 kilometres to the mainland for more supplies. With only three meagre days' worth of food left, the promise of treats was tempting but Lucinda's six kilometre long sugar wharf stretching out to sea was a symbol of the civilised world we were not ready to rejoin. We reasoned that with a south-easterly swell pushing us north, we could cover the return trip more quickly and be safely home before the food ran out. Besides, a few lean days would be a small price to pay for the unbroken seclusion.

### *Perfect conditions for enjoying the view on the return paddle north.*

Day seven had been a long, energetic paddle that had left us exhilarated. And as we now predicted that we would make it home in two days' time, we had a full day's ration to finish! We celebrated with creamy coffees and huge bowlfuls of rich tomato and lentil pasta topped with the last of the precious Parmesan cheese. It was a treat only truly hungry campers could appreciate!

Propelled by the promise of lunch at Hinchinbrook Island's only resort, we hit the water early the next day. We weren't surprised that it rained as we endured a rock'n'roll adventure across Ramsay Bay on a swell that broadened us all the way round Cape Sandwich.

Casually strolling into Cape Richards's posh resort restaurant, our sandy feet, matted hair and wet board shorts attracted a few glances.

swell. Visibility was down to 100 metres in any direction, but the gentle 'phiff' behind me was unmistakable.

A large dugong and calf had just surfaced for air and I turned around in time to watch their rounded torsos arc in unison. With a swirl of their tails, they disappeared. During the next 30 minutes, at least a dozen dugongs surfaced and resurfaced around us, unafraid of our noiseless vessels.

Despite the gloom of the grey mist and rain, watching the dugongs' sleek bodies slicing through the still, glassy sea was a magical experience. We waited in shivering silence until the dugongs had moved on to greener sea-grass beds and squealed with the joy of getting so close to so many of these gorgeous creatures. It was the moment of the trip, and the reason we plan to return to Hinchinbrook. Soon. 🐬

# Details AND Distractions

The moods and textures of Tasmania's World Heritage Areas,  
by Lyndon Giffard



*The beauty is in  
the detail: lichen  
patterns on a rock  
in the Forth River  
valley, near the  
Overland Track.*

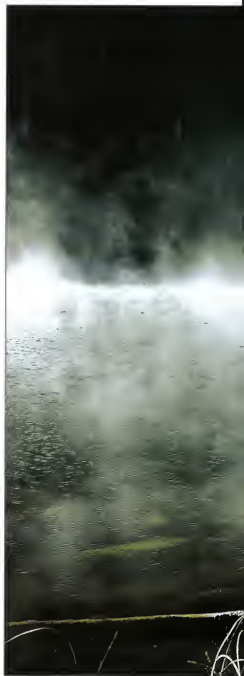




*Mood lighting illuminates a waterfall  
on the Overland Track.*



*A weathered tree near Lake Rhona.*



Lyndon Gifford is a native Tasmanian who now lives in London, working as an accountant but dreaming of being a photographer. He fell in love with the Tasmanian wilderness after walking the Overland Track six years ago. He returns regularly.






*Morning mist rises from Lake Vera, Central Tasmania.*

# A Wild, Wintry

A cold snap in spring turns the Major Mitchell Plateau, in Victoria's Grampians, into a winter



I'VE COMPLETED MANY WALKS IN THE VICTORIAN ALPS AND MY interest in the mountains has never waned. But lured by the promise of great views and reliable weather, I agreed to go to a region where I have never done anything more than a few day walks although it is no less scenic than the High Country. Grampians weather is great in spring and the wild flowers will be out, I was assured by Stephen, one of my regular walking companions. Our first attempt at crossing the Major Mitchell Plateau had been aborted a year earlier when the forecast had predicted showery weather. It sounded like a pitiful excuse at the time (and still does!) so we weren't going to let anything stop us on our next attempt. Again, it looked as though the weather wasn't

going to do us any favours. With a forecast of snow showers down to 400 metres (considered a very low altitude for snow even in the depths of winter) we had to prepare ourselves for numbing cold.

As Stephen, Zoë, Tony and I left the Grampians Tourist Road, walking along the Mt William Track, everything looked promising. There'd been some heavy showers early in the morning but the sun was out and we convinced ourselves that the worst of the weather was behind us. After a few kilometres of easy walking we crossed Fyans Creek in brilliant sunshine, some wild flowers here and there adding a splash of colour to the surroundings. Climbing steadily towards Mt William we passed numerous small

*Stephen Hamilton near the highest point of the Major Mitchell Plateau, looking out towards the Serra Range.*  
All photos by the author



# Weekend

onderland; by *Glenn van der Knijff*





*Stephen and Zoë Hamilton look happy despite the cold! The plains of western Victoria stretch out behind the eastern edge of the Major Mitchell Plateau.*

creeks, most of them seasonal, and climbed to a good lookout rock with a grandstand view towards a broken cliffline. A few small streams leaped from the cliff into the valley below; these tiny waterfalls would only last a few days without further rain.

We became aware of a cold, southerly breeze while we were resting and dark, brooding clouds moved in quickly over the Serra Range and Cathedral Rock. Small hail began to fall moments later but quickly stopped again and soon we were walking in sunshine once more. Climbing towards Mt William

road our views were limited by forest and we were unaware that more heavy clouds were about to descend upon us. The wind began to whip around and the hail started again, more seriously this time. Within minutes we were walking in a full-scale blizzard, with snow blowing in fiercely from the south and stinging any exposed skin. We reached the Mt William road and although it had only been snowing for about 15 minutes everything was white. I stopped to put on my over-pants and jacket and caught up with the others a few hundred metres up the road at a car

park—the end of the road for vehicles—where a number of tourists were playing in the snow.

Beyond the car park the road climbed steeply towards the summit of Mt William. An occasional beam of sunshine pierced the clouds as we ascended, triggering rapid thawing of the snow. Indeed, by the time we reached the top of Mt William most of the snow had melted! A cold wind buffeted us as we strained to make out the route ahead through the scudding fog. We needed to rest but stopping on the summit seemed decidedly uninviting, so we headed south along the Mt

William Range and lunched behind the relative shelter of a small tree.

Further along the range the track was quite rocky and not particularly easy to walk along. The recent rain- and snowfall had produced a lot of surface run-off—unfortunately, most of it seemed to be running along the track making it impossible to keep our shoes dry. With dark clouds brewing again we struggled to remain cheerful. It was a pity to be walking through such magnificent mountain country without being able to see it—we knew that the dramatic east-facing cliffs of the Mt William Range were off to our left somewhere behind a thick curtain of cloud.

Just as we began the descent into Boundary Gap we were hit by another southerly blast. Wind-driven snow stung us, the temperature plummeted and soon the ground was white again. There was little in the way of natural

First Wannon Creek was high on the Major Mitchell Plateau, about an hour's walk away. It was frustrating to find that the climb out of Boundary Gap was much harder than we had envisaged. It was extremely steep and the route seemed to climb straight up over a number of small boulders which we had to climb on hands and knees. A slippery cover of snow made this quite tedious. As I pulled myself over another rock, my rucksack caught on an overhanging branch as I reached the crux and the jolt forced me backwards. I fell only a few metres, but the weight of my rucksack drove me head first into the mud and snowy slush. My warm gloves became uselessly sodden and I was now truly cold for the first time that day.

I cautiously negotiated the final boulders, slippery and treacher-

ous with the cover of snow, and reached the top of the plateau not far from our camp. I caught up with Stephen and Zoë and we waited for Tony to catch up. An unexpected break in the clouds gave us a fleeting glimpse of the Mt William Range sloping down towards the farmlands of western Victoria. The snow had settled on the trees far down the mountainside, nearly down to the plains. I left the others to admire the view and pushed on towards camp. The blizzard had eased but it was now incredibly cold; conditions felt like those you'd expect when snow-camping in the High Country.

I reached First Wannon Creek and to my surprise found four tents already there. Two

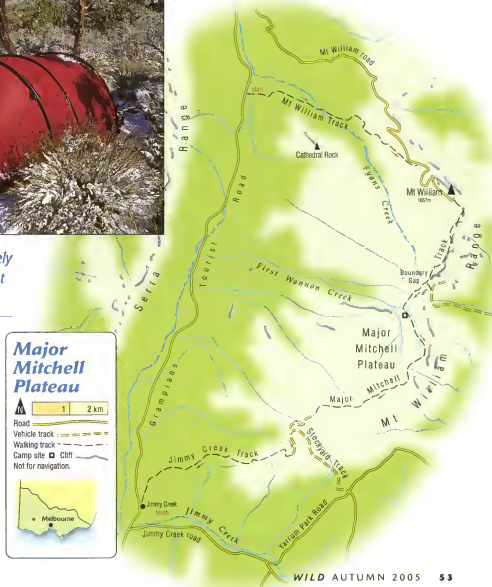
« Within minutes we were walking in a full-scale blizzard, with snow blowing in fiercely from the south and stinging any exposed skin. »



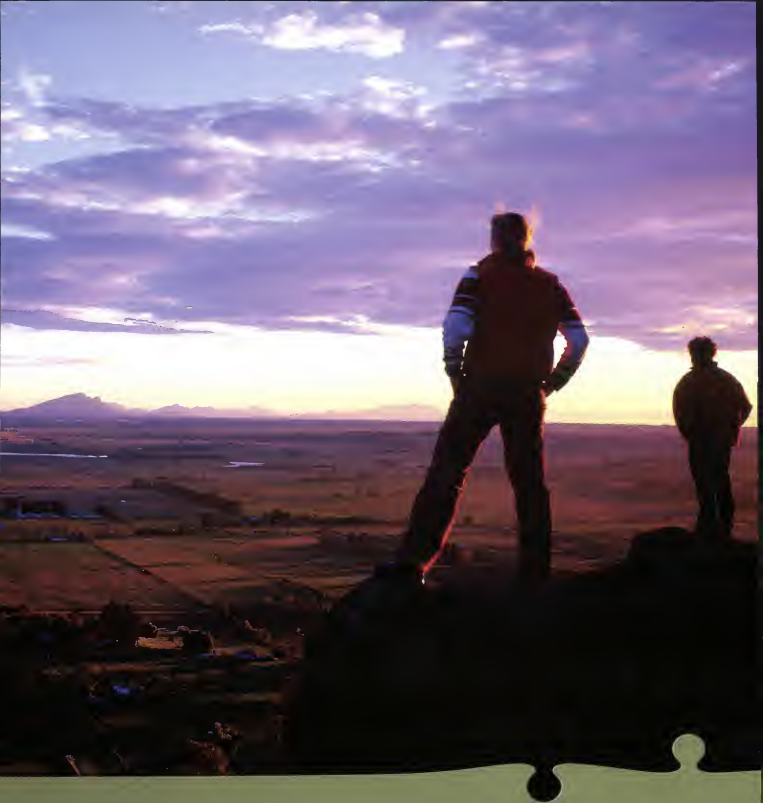
*The 'temporary alpine environment rarely seen in the Grampians'; the camp-site at First Wannon Creek.*

protection high on the Mt William Range and it was a relief to enter denser forest closer to the saddle. Snow covered the rocky track making the walk down tricky and we all slipped at least a couple of times. Tony was walking just behind me and was having particular difficulty, exacerbated by a troublesome knee. To make matters worse, the weight of the snow had caused the trees and bushes to hang over the track and clods of snow fell on us as we pushed our way along.

The level ground of Boundary Gap offered a brief respite for our jarred knees. Designated as a camping area, the gloom made the gap look more than a little depressing and it was an unpleasant place in which to linger. Our night's camp-site beside







## SOMETIMES WE ALL NEED A BIT OF SPACE

Space to climb, ride, abseil... all in the untouched environment of the Grampians region. And beyond its natural splendours discover a wealth of cultural history; Aboriginal rock art sites, wineries, grand homesteads and fascinating museums and galleries. Just 2.5 hours from Melbourne.

For more information call 1800 256 211 or go to [www.visitgrampians.com.au](http://www.visitgrampians.com.au)

  
*the Grampians Space to think*

  
*You'll love every piece of Victoria*



other walkers whom we had passed at Boundary Gap appeared from behind me. Then my dishevelled walking partners arrived looking the worse for wear. We pitched our tents quickly as yet another burst of snow lashed the mountain. The weather was in a bad mood! Luckily, we could all sit in Stephen's large tent vestibule and we enjoyed a hot meal as light snow showers continued to pass over the camp. We agreed that it was the coldest any of us had ever experienced bush-walking, and it even seemed colder than many nights we'd had while ski-touring.

We awoke the next morning to dead calm. I poked my head out of the tent and saw that it had stopped snowing. The sky hadn't

our jackets for long. Much of the snow had disappeared and there was a torrent of melt water running down the walking track as we climbed, but this was preferable to the cold and fog of the previous day. We soon arrived at the top of a cliffline on the eastern edge of the Major Mitchell Plateau from where we could see across the green plains below our feet. Behind us much of the jagged Serra Range was visible.

The route ahead climbed through wet, scrubby areas at times and over large rock slabs at others. Occasionally, we had to watch out for small cairns to guide us through the maze of rocky outcrops. At the highest point of the plateau, marked as 1167 metres on

forest. It was not pleasant; by the time Stephen and I reached a prominent knoll at the western end of the ridge we were soaked almost to the skin. A boulder offered a limited view over the surrounding bushland but there was little room to manoeuvre so we didn't loiter long. While Zoë and Tony battled the scrub somewhere behind us, we decided to get off the ridge to easier ground where we could find a better lunch spot.

The track dropped from the knoll at a brutal grade and it was difficult to keep our footing on the thick carpet of wet bark and leaves that made the path slick and slimy. We caught up with the two walkers who'd left camp a few hours before us as they


skidded down the track. We had trouble remaining upright and all slipped on to our backsides a few times. Fortunately, the proceedings were more humorous than dangerous and injury seemed unlikely.

We stumbled into a grassy saddle at the junction with Stockyard Track and sat down for lunch. Zoë and Tony soon joined us—judging by their appearance they had had similar trouble on the descent.

The weather was cold and overcast so we were soon on our way again. We strolled along Stockyard Track, views of the Serra Range appearing occasionally through the trees, and soon turned on to a side-track that we followed to a helpad. From here Jimmy Creek Track led

down a prominent spur where we could see the final section of our route. For the last few kilometres our group spread out and I found myself walking on my own; this suited me fine. The walking was straightforward compared to the upper sections of Mt William and the Major Mitchell Plateau and I let my mind wander without concentrating on the task at hand—soon I was miles away.

The drone of passing vehicles snapped me out of my day-dream and hinted that our weekend adventure was nearly over. Quite suddenly I could see the others ahead of me by the roadside. Stephen walked down the road to the Jimmy Creek camping area to hitch a lift back to his car at the beginning of the Mt William Track. We sat and

waited. Except for passing vehicles everything was silent. Birds flew past in the gentle breeze, flies buzzed lazily. Wattles flowered nearby, a sign that spring was about to arrive. I sat back to enjoy the few remaining moments of solitude, letting my eyes shut and mind wander again, knowing that all too soon we'd be back in the bustle of the city. 



*Zoë Hamilton admires the temporary waterfalls pouring from the south-western edge of Mt William.*

improved much but I got up anyway to have a look around the camp-site. It was very cold but the snow-dappled plateau was serenely beautiful, creating a temporary alpine environment rarely seen in the Grampians. The people from the four tents were also awake. They packed and departed hastily, obviously expecting a slow trip, and headed in the direction from where we had come. The other two walkers also left camp early and were moving higher on to the Major Mitchell Plateau where we'd probably catch up to them later.

The sun was trying to penetrate the clouds, which broke up markedly during the next few hours. By the time we had breakfast the sky was almost clear. In the crisp sunshine the camp-site looked pristine and I hastily snapped photographs to capture the scene before the snow thawed.

By late morning we were on our way. The sun warmed us nicely and we didn't need

the map, wind-blown snow still clung to the stunted trees. We could see in nearly all directions from this grandstand viewing point; farmlands, craggy ranges and the snowy summit of Mt William all came into view. A bit further west, where the plateau began to drop away sharply, we were able to see the Serra Range in all its finery. Silhouetted against the dark peaks of the Victoria Range to the west, the jagged crest looked like the back of an aged dinosaur; at the same time mystic and exciting, brooding and sinister. We were captivated. Clouds had begun to creep up on us again so we took a last look and then followed the track down on to a narrow ridge.

Our route along the ridge weaved through a web of snow-laden scrub and dripping

## Glenn van der Knijff

grew up in the Victorian Alps where he developed an insatiable interest in mountain recreation, particularly cross-country skiing and bushwalking. He's skied in Canada and the USA but his most memorable activity recently was a trekking trip to Nepal, which culminated in an ascent of Mera Peak (6461 metres).



# ADVENTURE CONSULTANTS

high altitude expeditions

the climbing  
professionals

small groups • quality first



high altitude expeditions



mountaineering instruction



7 summits

PO Box 97, Wanaka 9152, New Zealand  
Tel 64 3 443 8711, Email info@adventure.co.nz

www.adventureconsultants.co.nz

# HAVE YOU VISITED THE Wild WEB SITE LATELY?

## • Searchable *Wild* index

Search the contents of every issue of *Wild* and every *WildGUIDE*!

## • *Wild* Diary

Rucksack-sports events and instruction courses, with click-through links

## • Press releases

## • The *Wild* Story

## • *WildGUIDES*

Full contents listed

## • And much, much more...

www.wild.com.au



### eXplorist 100

- Electronic trail
- 3-track log files with 2,000 points of interest each
- 500 waypoints & 20 routes
- AA batteries



### eXplorist 200

- Built-in base map
- 5-track log files - 2,000 points of interest each
- 500 waypoints & 20 routes
- AA batteries



### eXplorist 300

- Barometer & 2-axis electronic compass
- Built-in base map
- 5-track log files with 2000 points of interest each
- AA batteries



### New eXplorist 400

- SD card expansion
- Rechargeable Li-Ion batteries
- USB port
- Compatible with DiscoverAus mapping software
- Built-in base map
- Available in April



### New eXplorist 500

- Hi-res colour screen
- SD card expansion
- Rechargeable Li-Ion batteries
- USB port & built-in base map
- Compatible with DiscoverAus mapping software



### New eXplorist 600

- Hi-res colour screen
- Barometer & 3-axis electronic compass
- SD card expansion
- Rechargeable Li-Ion batteries
- USB port & compatible with DiscoverAus software

Rugged ... Compact ... Affordable ...



MAGELLAN

eXplorist series

Each eXplorist GPS unit features: large high-contrast 2.3 inch LCD screen with zoom & amber backlight; quick & easy one button access to map, points of interest, goto routes & menu; full GPS keyboard & joystick; made from waterproof, rubber-armoured, impact resistant plastic

For stockists contact:

**Next Destination**  
GPS & Communication Distributors  
Freecall: 1800 644 033  
www.nextdestination.com.au

— THE ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES, CHAPTER IV<sub>a</sub> —

# NATURAL SELECTION; OR THE SURVIVAL OF THE PERFECTLY EVOLVED.



Fig. 1: Scarpa Trek, circa 1985.



Fig. 2: Australia



Fig. 3: The highly evolved Trek Pro, circa 2005.



HYDROPHOBIC HS-12 SILICONE TREATED LEATHER

NEW, MORE COMFORTABLE CUT

ONE-PIECE LEATHER UPPER

VIBRAM® GRINTA SOLE

...& MORE!



**ADAPT & SURVIVE.** In the mid eighties, Scarpa set a new standard for bushwalking boots with the Scarpa Trek. Comfortable, supportive and practically indestructible, each handmade Trek combined the highest-quality Italian construction with a design that was completely focused on the needs of Australian bushwalkers. **REVOLUTIONARY EVOLUTION.** Now—20 years later—it's time for a few changes. The new Trek Pro has been engineered from the ground up to take advantage of modern design techniques and materials—like incredibly grippy Vibram® Grinta soles, a hydrophobic one-piece leather upper, and completely redesigned inners & cushioning. The end result is a boot that's more rugged, more comfortable and more durably water resistant than ever before—a boot that's perfectly evolved to survive Australian conditions.

# Victoria's other wilderness coast

## Lake Tyers to Marlo, by Greg Caire

ON THE SOUTHERN VICTORIAN COAST BETWEEN LAKE TYERS AND MARLO is a pristine and rarely visited stretch of deserted beach and dunes, making up the eastern extremity of Ninety Mile Beach. This area is surprisingly remote and little visited considering East Gippsland's geography and the walk's proximity to the sea. Vehicle access is only available at the start of the walk (near the Lake Tyers outflow and at Pettmans Beach) and at the end (at Corringle Beach, near the mouth of the Snowy River). Walkers are likely to encounter numerous southern fur seals basking on the sand which will be extremely surprised to see a pack-toting human invading their domain.

Though it is a technically easy walk, with simple navigation (just follow the beach!) and no major hills to climb, the two or three days of walking on sand that is alternately loose, then firm, can be surprisingly arduous. Your legs will get an intense workout even with boots on, and calf and quad muscles will be screaming for mercy by the time you reach Corringle Beach. The walk can easily be done in reverse; however, the wind is often from the south and it is better to have this at your back if a storm blows in from Bass Strait. You can complete the walk in two long days. Three days will give you more time to complete the car shuttle and allow plenty of swimming if the weather is warm.

### When to go

East Gippsland is blessed with a milder winter than the rest of Victoria so autumn and winter can be great. Strong southerly fronts can blast out of Bass Strait at any time of year; bring warm clothing and waterproof/breathable rainwear regardless. The walk can be done at any time of year but bring plenty of protection from the scorching summer sun. The UV light reflects off the sand and ocean so good sunglasses, sunscreen and a hat are essential.

### Safety

Scrub in this area harbours the paralysis tick; check thoroughly for these little terrors every evening. Brown snakes and tiger snakes may be found in the shady vegetation around sandunes and in the mire of Ewing Marsh so take care when collecting fresh water. The ocean along Ninety Mile Beach is also pretty wild and rips and strong undertows are common; exercise caution while swimming. Water can be scarce in summer and during drought so take at least two days' worth of water with you to begin with, until you know that water is available. It is recommended that water from Ewing Marsh be filtered (or at least chemically purified or boiled) before consumption.

### Maps

The Natmap *Orbost* 1:100 000 topographic sheet covers most of the walk, with the Natmap *Murrungowar* 1:100 000 sheet and the



### The walk AT A GLANCE

Grade	Easy to moderate
Length	Two-three days
Distance	42 kilometres
Type	Beach and vegetated dunes
Region	East Gippsland coast, Victoria
Nearest towns	Lake Tyers, Marlo
Start, finish	Tyers House Track car park, mouth of the Snowy River (opposite Marlo township)
Maps	Natmap <i>Orbost</i> 1:100 000, Natmap <i>Murrungowar</i> 1:100 000, Outdoor Leisure Map <i>Lake Tyers</i> 1:25 000
Best time	April–October, but can be completed in any season
Special points	The beach faces south and is exposed to strong winds from Bass Strait. The loose sand will make walkers' calves ache! Look out for ticks and snakes along the dunes and swamp.

*Walkers head east along Ninety Mile Beach as gathering storms threaten. Greg Caire*

Outdoor Leisure Map *Lake Tyers* 1:25 000 covering the rest.

### Further reading

Peter Cook and Chris Dowd's small guidebook *Walking the Wilderness Coast—Lakes Entrance to Rumbula*, published by Hill of Content, is an excellent resource, with walk descriptions covering the entire Wilderness Coast from Lake Tyers to Eden in New South Wales.

### Permits

Apart from the Corringle Beach Fore-shore Reserve (at the walk's end) and the Ewing Marsh Wildlife Reserve, in a conservation context this stretch of Ninety Mile Beach is largely unprotected. No per-

mits are required for walking at present and bush camping is permitted.

### Access

Follow the Princess Highway to the Tyers House turn-off, approximately 12 kilometres east of Nowa Nowa. Follow the sandy Tyers



House Track for about 16 kilometres to the parking area at its end. The beautiful Ninety Mile Beach is signposted from here and is reached by a short walk through the well-established sand-dunes. To do the full two–three day bushwalk to Marlo, a car shuttle of three hours is required: drive two or more vehicles to the parking area at Corringle Beach where there is a Parks Victoria camping area. This is the end of the bushwalk on the western bank of the Snowy River estuary; Marlo township is on the eastern bank. Leave a vehicle here and drive back to the start of the walk as outlined above.



## The walk

The route follows a continuous stretch of Ninety Mile Beach roughly east and is entirely on sand. A line of high, vegetated sand-dunes is on your left for the entire length of the walk, providing protected camp-sites where sand blow-outs give access to flat ground. These dunes have established vegetation and are stabilised in places by trees, banksias and shrubs. A continuous swamp known as Ewing Marsh or 'Morass' backs these dunes to the north, forming an isolated, sandy isthmus that stretches for more than 40 kilometres. The swampy marsh usually provides drinking-water (which must be filtered) but can dry up after extended drought. Ewing Marsh is bordered by thick eucalypt forest to the north, providing a habitat for wildlife including dingoes, kangaroos, wallabies, large lace monitors (goannas) and many birds. Take a fuel stove; don't burn the fallen banksias and eucalypt as they contribute organic matter to the thin, sandy soils.

## Day one

From the parking area at the end of Tyers House Track, head south over the dunes to Ninety Mile Beach. A side-trip (about four kilometres return) to the mouth of Lake Tyers can be made; head right (west). This was an old Cobb & Co coach route in the 1800s; coaches crossed the sandy mouth of the lake at low tide. From the starting-point walk left (east) for approximately two hours to Pettmans Beach. Beyond the dunes is a vehicle-access point: you may see a fisherman or two. However, from here the beach is likely to be deserted until the end of the walk. There are pit toilets, camp-sites and a small water tank at Pettmans Beach. It is best to continue up the beach for another hour and seek a camp-site in the dunes to the north above the beach; there are taller trees here, which will give protection from the wind. Several flat camp-sites with room for three or four tents exist but you need to scout the dunes for suitable sites.

## Day two

Descend the dunes to the beach and continue east (left). You are likely to encounter southern fur seals basking on the sand just beyond the reach of the surf. Continue along the beach for about three hours. Keep an eye out for breaks in the line of dunes to your left. Cross the largest of these blow-outs; from the crest of the dune you will find yourself above Ewing Marsh, which extends for many kilometres on both sides. Descend the steep, northern face of the sand-dunes to the swampy, reed-filled marsh. You will probably find water. This is the only reliable water on the entire route so filter enough for the next two days. (It is usually turbid and full of organic matter: let it settle in a spare billy or water bucket before trying to purify it or it will quickly block your filter.) Observe the bird life here, or camp in the flat, vegetated area between dunes if your party desires a short day. You can head back over the dunes to the beach and walk east for a further hour to another blow-out that provides sheltered camping.

## Day three

Head back to the beach from the dunes. Head left (east) again, making your way along Ninety Mile Beach. The vegetation bordering the dunes changes as you pass. Several blow-outs interrupt the continuous wall of dunes and make good lunch spots sheltered from the relentless wind. From camp, continue down the sand for about five hours until you reach a section of quite high, steep, vegetated dunes that mark the beginning of the Corringle Foreshore Reserve. This is just before the end of Ninety Mile Beach and the mouth of the Snowy River. On the opposite bank of the Snowy is the town of Marlo. Look for a track and small blow-out in the tall sand-hills: the shape and location of this varies with the time of year and wind direction. At the end of this track is your vehicle and the end of the walk. 🐾

Greg Carr has been pursuing outdoors activities since the late 1970s as his somewhat unfashionable outdoors clothing will attest. An interest in photography and the world's less developed regions spawned visits to remote and beautiful areas including Brazil, Bolivia, China, Peru, Pakistan and Tibet, and led to a foray into outdoors journalism that continues today.

## SEAL LINE Baja™ Bags



Proven on rivers, lakes, and oceans around the world, Baja Bags are versatile and durable. Made with 20-ounce vinyl sides and a heavy-duty 34-ounce bottom to resist punctures and abrasion, they are made to withstand just about any abuse Mother Nature, or your crew, can dish out. Our Dry Seal™ roll-down closure keeps the elements out, and the attached D-ring will secure the bag inside your raft, boat or luggage rack. Available in 7 sizes from 4.5 L to 54 L.

## SEAL LINE See Bags™

Take the guesswork out of what's packed inside. See Bags are made with durable 19-ounce vinyl that is transparent to help you find what you need quickly. Bags close with our watertight Dry Seal™ roll-down closure and have a D-ring attachment, and heavy-duty bottom. Available in 4 sizes from 4.5 L to 32 L.



Distributed by Spelean Pty Ltd. Call 1800 634 853 for your nearest stockist.  
<http://www.spelean.com.au> <http://www.cascade-designs.com>

## ROK Straps

ROK Straps' range of elastic cargo fasteners are perfect for mountain bikes, 4x4s, trailers, boating and roof racks - anywhere an item needs securing. With a range of straps - standard, heavy duty, marine and adjustable, as well as fixed lengths, you'll find exactly what you're looking for.



**ROK straps** the better safer stronger bungee by a long s-t-r-e-t-c-h!

Exclusively distributed in Australia by  
 Spelean Pty Ltd.  
 Ph. (02) 9966 9800 Fax (02) 9966 9811  
 e-mail [rokstraps@spelean.com.au](mailto:rokstraps@spelean.com.au)  
[www.spelean.com.au](http://www.spelean.com.au)

Double shock hook for double strength  
 Plastic coated non-scratch hooks  
 Sew-in hooks for increased strength  
 Rot resistant & UV protected materials for safer, longer working life  
 Flat cord resists rolling, increases strength and protects cargo  
 100% natural rubber for superior stretch and tear resistance



Kill things you can't pronounce  
 with technology you don't understand.

## MSR<sup>®</sup>EVOLUTION

Giardia. Cryptosporidia. Campylobacter jejuni. Microbes like these can tie your tongue as well as your stomach in knots. That's why MSR<sup>®</sup> developed the revolutionary MIOX<sup>®</sup> Purifier. This is the smallest, most advanced way to purify large volumes of water, with no pumping, maintenance, or iodine required. It works by creating a potent solution of mixed oxidants (MIOX) that makes short work of even the most unpronounceable pathogen and leaves you with a mouthful of nothing more than safe, purified water.

Distributed in Australia by Spelean Pty Ltd., P.O. Box 645, ARTARMON, NSW 1570  
 Ph: 02 9966 9800 Fax: 02 9966 9811 [thermanest@spelean.com.au](mailto:thermanest@spelean.com.au) [www.spelean.com.au](http://www.spelean.com.au)



# For ever changing environments, trust Macpac's Tekapo

trusted trekking solutions for any activity, anywhere on earth

Tekapo features: Aztec<sup>®</sup> pack fabrics – tough as nails and weatherproof; Air Supply<sup>™</sup> harness and Air.Mesh<sup>™</sup> fabric – for comfort and ventilation.

Macpac's trusted trekking system is the complete solution for any journey. Packs, tents, sleeping bags and clothing for any activity, any environment, anywhere on earth. Since 1973.



## Subscribe to **NewScientist** and save 40% PLUS receive a free gift – Lonely Planet's stunning hard-cover pictorial *One Planet*.

NewScientist is the world's leading weekly science and technology magazine, and winner of more than 40 major awards. NewScientist distils the key developments and issues and provides informative and entertaining reading for people who want to know what is happening, why and how it will affect them.

Subscribe now to take advantage of this exclusive offer to *Wild* readers.



**NewScientist**

Phone: 1300 360 126 or +612 9422 2666 or Fax: +612 9422 2922 Reply Paid: NewScientist subscriptions, Reply Paid 60416, Chatswood DC NSW 2067

- ☐ 1 year to NewScientist for \$199 (inc GST) + One Planet FREE – SAVE 40% ☐ 3 months to NewScientist for \$60 (inc GST) – SAVE 23%  
☐ 6 months to NewScientist for \$100 (inc GST) – SAVE 40% ☐ 4 WEEK FREE TRIAL

Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Enclosed is a cheque \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to Reed Business Information or debit my ☐ Bankcard ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ Amex ☐ Diners  
 Card No: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cardholder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Terms and Conditions: The NewScientist + One Planet subscription offer expires 30th June 2005. Savings based on news-stand price. No refunds. We are committed to handling your personal information in accordance with the Privacy Act. See [www.reedbusiness.com.au/privacypolicy.asp](http://www.reedbusiness.com.au/privacypolicy.asp) for details. ☐ Please tick if you do not wish to receive further information from NewScientist.  
☐ Please tick if you do not wish to receive further information from relevant third parties.

Reed Business Information **NS050P03**

# MSR<sup>®</sup>EVOLUTION

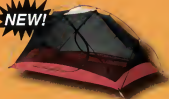
## MSR

We call it a breakthrough in space-to-weight ratio.

You call it elbow room.

### The MSR Fast & Light™ Tents. Ultra-Light, Spacious, Versatile, Easy to Set Up.

**NEW!**



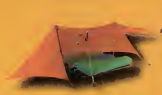
The two-person **HubbaHubba 05** now has 2 doors, is a paltry **1.8 kg** and can be pitched in two freestanding tarp-shelter modes for great weight savings.



The one-person **Hubba** is an astounding **1.3 kg**.



**The Missing Link.** Combining gargantuan floor space and amazing airflow into a miniscule **1.3 kg** package, this shelter has the weight savings of a tarp and the insect-proof security of a tent.

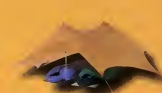


**The Trekker** can be used separately as minimalist tarp, or combined with the Tent Insert to create a double wall tent that provides great roominess and protection from insects.

Serious weight savings have always meant making serious compromises in comfort and quality—until now. MSR has created an innovative collection of modular shelters that combine enormous living spaces, durability and versatility into ridiculously light packages. Starting with a high-tech silicone and polyurethane coated nylon fabric, we reduced overall weights by up to 27% without compromising reliability or living space. Then we built up from there.



**Twin Peaks** – 2 person, and only **0.8 kg**, is our most weatherproof tarp-style design with full walls. The doors open fully for easier cooking and additional venting.



**The Trekker Wing** is a high-performance ultra-minimalist, shaped tarp for the seriously weight conscious - **0.6 kg**. Excellent ventilation for hot or muggy climates.

The revolutionary new MSR® Fast & Light™ tents are more than just lightweight. They're livable. They've been engineered to dramatically increase interior space while keeping weight to a bare minimum. Simply put, you'll have a tent that's easy to carry, with more room than ever to spread out. So now you'll be comfortable wherever you camp.

# MSR



# TENTS for bushwalking

John Chapman helps you to find a home away from home

## Wild Gear Surveys what they are and what they're not

The purpose of *Wild Gear Surveys* is to assist readers in purchasing specialist outdoors equipment of the quality and with the features most appropriate for their needs; and to save them time and money in the process.

The cost of 'objective' and meaningful testing is beyond the means not only of *Wild*, but of the Australian outdoors industry in general and we are not aware of such testing being regularly carried out by an outdoors magazine anywhere in the world. Similarly, given the number of products involved, field testing is beyond the means of Australia's outdoors industry. *Wild Gear Surveys* summarise information, collate and present it in a convenient and readily comparable form, with guidelines and advice to assist in the process of wise equipment selection.

Surveyors are selected for their knowledge of the subject and their impartiality. Surveys are checked and verified by an independent referee, and reviewed by *Wild*'s editorial staff. Surveys are based on the items' availability and specifications at the time of the relevant issue's production; ranges and specifications may change later. Before publication each manufacturer/distributor is sent a summary of the surveyor's findings regarding the specifications of their products for verification.

Some aspects of surveys, such as the assessment of value and features—and especially the inclusion/exclusion of certain products—entail a degree of subjective judgement on the part of the surveyor, the referee and *Wild*, space being a key consideration.

'Value' is based primarily upon price relative to features and quality. A product with more elaborate or specialised features may be rated more highly by someone whose main concern is not price.

An important criterion for inclusion is 'wide availability'. To qualify, a product must usually be stocked by a number of specialist outdoors shops in the central business districts of the major Australian cities. With the recent proliferation of brands and models, and the constant ebb and flow of their availability, 'wide availability' is becoming an increasingly difficult concept to pin down.

Despite these efforts to achieve accuracy, impartiality, comprehensiveness and usefulness, no survey is perfect. Apart from the obvious human elements that may affect assessment, the quality, materials and specifications of any product may vary markedly from batch to batch and even from sample to sample. It is ultimately the responsibility of readers to determine what is best for their particular circumstances and for the use they have in mind for gear reviewed.



A humble tent gives a window through to another world. Stephen Hamilton

FOR YEARS WALKERS HAVE HAD THE CHOICE between buying a tent made in Australia or New Zealand, or a cheaper product made in another country. However, the last local manufacturer, Macpac, has now moved all manufacturing off shore. Repair and warranty services remain locally but the effect has been that tents are now significantly cheaper. Prices are so reasonable that owning more than one for use in different circumstances is practical. As for the tents themselves, designs have not changed a lot in the last two years. Domes and domed hybrids are the most common designs as they give maximum interior volume for the weight. Most tents are now made from nylon, the traditional material. The brief interest in polyester has waned, with only a few models being made in both nylon and the heavier polyester.

This survey concentrates on tents for general bushwalking and provides an idea of the range and types of tents that are available in the main outdoors shops in Australia at present.

### Intended capacity

The number of people the tent is intended to accommodate as specified by the manufacturer.

The Marmot Swallow  
2 dome tent.



### Design/shape

The floor shape of most tents is rectangular or near rectangular; designs have been classified according to the pole layout. A tunnel (T) has the opening on the narrow side (usually the head end) and traditionally the poles do not cross. A tunnel/dome (TD) is a hybrid of a tunnel and a dome as it has the door at the head end but uses poles that cross. A dome (D) design has poles that cross and the entrance or entrances on the longer side of the inner tent. A tarp is basically just a fly-sheet, designed to be used with trekking- or ski poles.

### Maximum internal dimensions

The largest measured size of the inner, length x width x height. Sizes are generally useful in comparing space; however, there are some

## Tents for bushwalking

	Intended capacity, people	Design shape	Maximum internal dimensions, length x width x height	Total weight, kilograms	No of poles	No of legs, min-max	No of vestibules	No of fly entrances	Roominess	Ease of pitch	Stability	Access	Value	Comments	Approx price, \$
<b>Bibler USA</b> www.bibbertents.com															
I-tent	2	TD	200 x 124 x 107	1.9	2	0-10	0	1	●●	●●●	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●	Optional vestibule extra	1000
Tempest	2	TD	215 x 152 x 107	3.0	4	3-17	2	2	●●1/2	●●	●●●1/2	●●●	●		1000
Ahwahnee 2	2	D	230 x 132 x 112	2.4	2+1	0-12	0	2	●●●	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●1/2	●1/2		1190
<b>Black Diamond Taiwan</b> www.blackdiamond.com															
Betamid	2	Tarp	248 x 203 x 112	1.2	(1)	6-8	na	1	●●●	●●1/2	●●●1/2	●●●1/2	●1/2	Poles are extra; optional floor	240
Megamid	3	Tarp	275 x 275 x 210	1.8	(2)	4-8	na	1	●●●●	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●●	●●	As above	395
<b>Black Wolf China</b> www.blackwolf.com.au															
Cicada	2	TD	225 x 130 x 100	3.2	4	4-14	1	1	●●●	●●	●●	●●1/2	●●●		300
<b>Eureka Vietnam</b> www.eureka.vn															
Moonshadow Duo	2	T	260 x 146 x 118	2.1	2	3-9	1	1	●1/2	●●1/2	●1/2	●●1/2	●●●		320
Moonriver 2	2	D	217 x 136 x 115	2.9	2	2-12	2	2	●●1/2	●●	●●	●●●	●●●1/2		330
El Capitan 2	2	D	232 x 140 x 120	3.2	2+1	4-18	2	2	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●●	●●1/2	●●●		450
<b>Fairlydown China</b> www.fairlydown.co.nz															
Escape	2	T	215 x 110 x 105	2.7	2	4-14	1	2	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●1/2		400
Assault	2	D	215 x 110 x 110	3.6	3	6-14	2	2	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●1/2		550
<b>Kathmandu China</b> www.kathmandu.com.au															
Northstar Plus	2	TD	230 x 135 x 106	2.8	3	1-18	1	1	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●	●●1/2	●●1/2	Summit Club member price	525
Mountain Plus	2	TD	220 x 140 x 106	3.6	4	2-16	2	2	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●●	As above	615
<b>Macpac Vietnam</b> www.macpac.vn															
Nautius	2	T	212 x 145 x 98	2.9	2	4-12	2	2	●●1/2	●●●	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●		450
Apollo	2	D	210 x 135 x 115	3.4	2	2-10	2	2	●●●	●●●1/2	●●●	●●1/2	●●●		500
Eclipse	2	SH	228 x 117 x 110	2.3	1	10-16	2	2	●●	●●1/2	●	●1/2	●●1/2		500
<b>Marmot China</b> www.marmot.com															
Eclipse	1	TD	220 x 95 x 95	2.2	2	2-12	1	1	●●1/2	●●	●●	●1/2	●●●		400
Equinox	2	D	235 x 152 x 130	3.1	3	4-13	2	2	●●●●	●●1/2	●●●	●●●	●●1/2		600
Swallow 2	2	D	244 x 146 x 105	4.1	3	3-15	2	2	●●●1/2	●●●	●●●●	●●●	●1/2		750

irregular designs where the maximum size is not typical of the tent.

### Total weight

Survey weights were specified by the manufacturer and should include everything for use when bushwalking. Variations in materials and ongoing manufacturing changes can cause weights to vary by 200-300 grams from those quoted. Some manufacturers quote 'minimum' or 'in-use' weights, which usually leave out things like pegs and carry bags. Ignore these lighter weights as most of the time you will need to carry the extras. Weight can sometimes be slightly reduced by replacing the supplied pegs with lighter models.

### Number of poles

The first number shows how many full-length poles there are that run from ground to ground. The second number (if there is one, after the +) shows the model's number of shorter poles. These poles usually hold up the top of the vestibule, improving ease of entry and storage volume. All tents surveyed have aluminium shock-corded poles. Poles come in a variety of diameters; check

carefully when purchasing spare or replacement poles. Three tents don't have poles and are designed to be used with trekking poles or ski stocks.



*The Black Diamond Megamid is a tarp-style tent, sold without poles or a floor.*

### Pegs

The minimum number of pegs needed are those required to put up the tent and fly in

windless conditions. The maximum number includes pegs for all peg- and storm-guy points.

### Number of vestibules

The number of vestibule areas without a floor that can be used for gear storage. In all models the vestibules could be accessed from the inner tent.

### Number of fly entrances

This column shows the number of external doors into the tent fly for each model. If ventilation is important for your needs consider tents with at least two doors on opposite ends for flow-through ventilation.

### Roominess

I rated the inner of each tent for its length, width and height giving each a mark from half to one-and-a-half. I then added up the score and considered an adjustment of up to a point for roof and vestibule design as dimensions alone don't indicate the useful space inside.

## Tents for bushwalking continued

	Included capacity, people	Design/shape	Maximum internal dimensions, length x width x height	Total weight, kilograms	No of poles	No of pegs, min-max	No of vestibules	No of fly entrances	Roominess	Ease of pitch	Stability	Access	Value	Comments	Average price, \$
<b>Mountain Designs China</b> <a href="http://www.mountaindesigns.com">www.mountaindesigns.com</a>															
Plateau	2	D	210 x 140 x 115	2.9	2	2-10	2	2	●●1/2	●●●	●●●	●●1/2	●●1/2		470
Neutrino Two	2	T	220 x 130 x 105	1.7	2	4-8	1	1	●●	●●●	●●●	●●1/2	●●		500
Kaon	2	D	210 x 165 x 115	2.4	3	2-10	2	2	●●●1/2	●●●	●●	●●●1/2	●●1/2		650
<b>MSR China</b> <a href="http://www.msrcorp.com">www.msrcorp.com</a>															
Zoid 2	2	T	250 x 140 x 100	2.1	2	8-11	1	1	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●	●●1/2	●●1/2		530
Missing Link	2	Rect	330 x 150 x 110	1.6	(2)	7-9	1	1	●●●1/2	●●	●1/2	●●●●	●●	Poles are extra	560
Hubba Hubba	2	TD	220 x 130 x 110	2.1	3	1-7	2	2	●●1/2	●●	●●1/2	●●	●●●		600
<b>Salewa Vietnam</b> <a href="http://www.salewa.com">www.salewa.com</a>															
Mica	1	D	210 x 120 x 105	2.3	2	2-10	1	1	●1/2	●●●	●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●		330
Bergen II	2	D	220 x 140 x 102	2.9	2+2	4-12	2	2	●●●	●●1/2	●●●	●●1/2	●●●1/2		450
Sierra Leone II	2	D	230 x 155 x 110	3.6	2+1	4-16	2	2	●●●●	●●1/2	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●1/2		570
<b>Sierra Designs China</b> <a href="http://www.sierradesigns.com">www.sierradesigns.com</a>															
Gamma	2	D	224 x 139 x 118	2.6	2+1	1-6	1	1	●●●	●●●	●●1/2	●●●1/2	●●●●		350
Clip Flashlight	2	T	226 x 147 x 109	2.1	2	6-13	1	1	●1/2	●●	●●	●●	●●●●		380
Hercules	2	TD	213 x 146 x 102	4.2	3	4-14	1	1	●●1/2	●●	●●●●	●●1/2	●●		950
<b>Snowgum Vietnam</b> <a href="http://www.snowgum.com.au">www.snowgum.com.au</a>															
Flash	2	T	235 x 142 x 105	2.4	2	4-10	2	2	●●	●●●	●●1/2	●●	●●●●		350
Storm Shelter	2-3	D	210 x 145 x 117	2.8	2+1	4-14	2	2	●●●	●●1/2	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●●●●		400
Caddis	2-3	T	235 x 170 x 110	3.0	3	4-16	2	2	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●1/2	●●●1/2		500
<b>The North Face China</b> <a href="http://www.thenorthface.com">www.thenorthface.com</a>															
Talus 23	2	D	230 x 136 x 117	3.1	3	2-12	2	2	●●●1/2	●●●	●●●	●●1/2	●●1/2		500
Roadrunner	2	D	220 x 122 x 106	2.9	2+1	2-16	2	2	●●1/2	●●●1/2	●●1/2	●●	●●		700
<b>Wilderness Equipment Vietnam</b> <a href="http://www.wilderness.com.au">www.wilderness.com.au</a>															
Dart	1	D	240 x 110 x 85	2.1	3	0	1	1	●●1/2	●●	●●●	●●	●●●		400
Second Arrow	2	T	200 x 120 x 102	2.6	2	3-10	1	2	●1/2	●●1/2	●●●	●●●	●●●	Polyester version available	600
First Arrow	2-3	T	220 x 155 x 120	3.3	3	3-12	2	3	●●●1/2	●●●	●●●●	●●●	●●1/2	Polyester version available	800

● poor ●● average ●●● good ●●●● excellent Design/shape: Dome with entrance on long side, Rectangular awning design, SH single hoop, TD dome or tunnel with crossing poles, entrance on short side, Tunnel with entrance on short side All Biber tents and MSR Missing Link are single-skin tents, doors are inner only na not applicable † not seen by surveyor ‡ not seen by referee The country listed after the manufacturer/brand name is the country in which the products are made

### Ease of pitch

Factors that affect this rating are whether a tent has continuous pole sleeves, the width of pole sleeves (some are very narrow!), pole lengths (different lengths can make it difficult to find the correct pole) and whether the poles cross (making it harder to erect).

### Stability

This rates the overall stability of a tent against side forces. This rating is subjective as we could not test the tents in a wind tunnel. It is influenced by how I have seen designs perform and little features like attachments between the fly and inner, internal stiffeners and how well the panels are cut—they can make a big difference.

### Access

I rated the tents on how easy it was to enter the tent and

sit down. Tents with high or wide openings rate better than those with low or long entrances. Designs that expose the floor to rain when the tent door is opened are undesirable—I deducted up to a point for this.

### Value

This is not simply a value-for-money rating. The price of the tent determined half the rating and the weight, roominess and entrance design were then considered equally. This rating was then compared with that of similar designs for the sake of consistency. The rating applies to tents for general bushwalking use from the tropics to extended walks throughout Australia. All tents surveyed are very good and a low rating does not mean a poor tent. The three models given

## Other brands available

Some of these tents are available from less traditional shops such as camping or disposal shops and department stores.

Brand	Distributor	Contact
Canbee	Clipper International	(02) 9698 8944
Coleman	Coleman Brands	1800 224 350
Doite	MB Wrapp	(03) 9310 4696
Exped	Aktiv8	(02) 9939 5611
GoLite	Sea to Summit	1800 787 677
Mountain Hardware	Snowgum	(03) 9543 9988
Roman	Roman Camping	(02) 9516 5150
Vango	Ansoo	(03) 9471 1500
Vaude	Rucac Supplies	(02) 9546 8455

The MSR Missing Link looks a bit different: the use of trekking poles.





dehumidifier

This radical new design combines the best of two existing tent technologies into one design. The Evolution is the first design to truly eliminate condensation in a design that is both lightweight and weatherproof in all conditions.

EVOLUTION



LPS  
LIGHTWEIGHT  
PITCHING SYSTEM

Fairydawn®  
ENGINEERED FOR EXTREMES FAIRYDOWN ADVENTURE

www.fairydownnz.com



## ROUGHING IT without toughing it!

with TASMANIAN WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES



Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned bushwalker, TWE offers a unique range of integrated services so you can experience the best of Tasmania's wilderness.

We offer a choice of practical solutions to make your bushwalk smoother: transport from Hobart to all National Parks; a range of comfortable accommodation; quality equipment for hire; and gourmet food for the track. Pick the service you require or take a fully guided tour that includes all these features. It's up to you!

Let us do the legwork so you can do the walking!



Ring for a free brochure  
on 1300 882 293 or  
check out our website  
[www.bctas.com.au](http://www.bctas.com.au)  
for further information

TOT



## ALPINE GUIDES

winter program 2005

Ice Climbing  
Ski Touring  
Guiding & Instruction



IT'S BIG, IT'S COOL,  
IT'S WINTER!

Alpine Guides (Aoraki) Ltd  
Mount Cook, New Zealand  
ph 001164 3 4351834  
[mtcook@alpineguides.co.nz](mailto:mtcook@alpineguides.co.nz)

photo: Lisa Auer

[www.alpineguides.co.nz](http://www.alpineguides.co.nz)

a one in this column are excellent for some uses but are expensive compared to other, less specialised tents.

### Price

This is the recommended price including GST. Those who give preference to equipment made in Australia or New Zealand will be disappointed as all tents are now made overseas, with all local companies manufacturing off shore. This has generally reduced prices.

### Buy right

The following are things to consider when buying a tent.

- **Interior length:** lie down and make sure the inner is long enough. Tents should be at least 20 centimetres longer than your height. If a sloping roof is close to your feet or head, add an extra ten centimetres.
- **Interior height:** is there enough room to change clothes without crushing other occupants? Sit up on your knees in the highest part of the tent to check.
- **Ventilation:** there should ideally be two openings as high as possible. Many tents use the entrances—check that they stay open when wet and don't allow rain to fall directly on to the floor.
- **Entrances:** consider what the entrance will be like in poor weather when you try to remove a waterproof jacket as you get in. Tents that require crawling are best avoided.
- **Separate pitching:** only an insect screen is sometimes required in warm or humid climates. Is it possible to erect the inner and/or the outer on their own?

The Macpac Eclipse is a single-hoop tent.



### Availability

You will not find all the tents surveyed here available in any one shop, or even in every State. Most shops have only one to three brands and only some models on sale or display. This survey examines a maximum of three tents from each brand—many more may be available. ☺

Bushwalking writer John Chapman has been contributing to *Wild* since issue one. His favourite place is Tasmania although he regularly visits all other Australian States.

This survey was refereed by Jim Graham.

Jacko Trekking Poles.

More stability  
in every situation.



Jacko  
telescopic trekking  
poles are like a set  
of extra legs, giving you  
more stability and support.

With up to 20% reduced knee strain  
and muscle load, the only thing  
you'll find hard is to stop.

**JACKO**

For enquiries ph (03) 9471 1500, email: [ansco@ansco.com.au](mailto:ansco@ansco.com.au), web: [www.ansco.com.au](http://www.ansco.com.au)  
Ansco Pty Ltd, 11B Northland Home Centre, Gower Street, Preston Vic. 3072

# HOW TO ORDER

## Phone us

(03) 9826 8483

(Bankcard, MasterCard, Visa)

## Online

[www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)

(Bankcard, MasterCard, Visa)

## In writing

FAX: (03) 9826 3787

(Bankcard, MasterCard, Visa)

### EMAIL:

[mailorder@wild.com.au](mailto:mailorder@wild.com.au)

(Bankcard, MasterCard, Visa)

### MAIL:

Wild, Reply Paid 415  
Wild Publications Pty Ltd  
PO Box 415  
Pahran Vic 3181  
(No postage stamp required)  
(Credit card, cheque or money order)

## To order in writing

- 1 List what you want
- 2 Determine the total cost
- 3 Advise us of your credit card details: (Minimum credit card order \$10)

- Type of card  
(Bankcard, MasterCard, Visa)
- Card number
- Card expiry date
- Card holder's name  
(please print)
- Signature (for faxed or mailed orders)
- Date

### OR

Enclose cheque or money order (to Wild Publications Pty Ltd)

- 4 Provide the name, address, postcode and phone number for recipient of order.

# Wild THINGS

## Wild Back Issues

\$7.99 ea (\$13.25 overseas—airmail)

**SPECIAL!** (Australia only)  
**Any 5 for only \$30**

(excluding the rare issues listed on page 86)

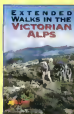
For details of contents of each Wild issue, visit  
[www.wild.com.au/wild/wildback.htm](http://www.wild.com.au/wild/wildback.htm)

Issue nos available: 18, 20, 21, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 53, 55, 57, 65, 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95.



## Wild GUIDES

YOUR BUSH POCKET-PARTNERS



**\$8.20 ea**

(\$8.50 overseas—airmail)

Alternative Tasmanian Walks CRCV

Blue Mountains Canyons CRCV

Blue Mountains Walks CRCV

Classic New South Wales Walks CRCV

Classic Tasmanian World Heritage Walks CRCV

Classic Victorian Alpine Walks CRCV

Equipment for Bushwalking CRCV

Extended Walks in the Victorian Alps CRCV

Getting Started CRCV

Peak Bagging Walks CRCV

Waterfalls Walks CRCV

White-water Paddling in Victoria CRCV

## Wild Binders



**\$19.95 ea**

(\$23.95 overseas—airmail)

Holds eight magazines  
+ index

## NEW!

**Searchable  
Wild Index**

online

[www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)

**Clear Plastic  
Covers for  
WildGUIDES and  
RockGUIDES**

**\$2.30 ea**

(\$2.90 overseas—airmail)

**Copies of Wild/  
Rock Articles  
\$7.99/article**

(\$8.55 overseas—airmail)

## Wild Posters

### Freycinet Peninsula

420 x 297 mm  
plain \$9.20 ea  
(\$14.95 overseas—airmail)  
laminated \$13.20 ea  
(\$18.55 overseas—airmail)



### Girraween

580 x 416 mm  
plain \$14.70 ea  
(\$21.70 overseas—airmail)  
laminated \$19.40 ea  
(\$24.20 overseas—airmail)



Please allow 28 days for delivery of goods. All goods may not arrive in same package. All prices include packing and either surface mail within Australia or airmail to overseas.

# Subscribe to Wild

PHONE:

(03) 9826 8483

or

ONLINE:

[www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)

You can also **SUBSCRIBE** by  
**EMAIL** or **MAIL** or by **FAX**—see opposite



- ▶ **SAVE** up to \$13
- ▶ **FREE** home delivery
- ▶ **PROTECTION** against price increases
- ▶ Get your copy **FIRST**

## plus FREE STUFF!

- ▶ **FREE WildGUIDE** of your choice with **all** subscriptions
- ▶ **PLUS OPTION TO BUY A WILD BINDER FOR ONLY \$10** when you subscribe for three years (Australia only)  
(limit one for each Australian three-year subscription; simply add \$10 to your total)



3 years	\$82.50	SAVE \$13.38 (\$159 overseas—airmail)
2 years	\$58.90	SAVE \$5.00 (\$110 overseas—airmail)
1 year	\$31.95	(\$56.95 overseas—airmail)

All offers apply to **new and renewing subscribers** and must be **requested when paying** for your order.

Wild is published each March, June, September and December. Subscriptions start with the **next issue**, so allow up to 12 weeks for delivery of your first copy.

All offers and prices valid for the duration of the cover date of this issue. For current prices and offers see [www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au) All Australian prices include GST.

# BRAND NAME PRODUCTS



Trade Enquiries:  
Zen Imports Pty Ltd  
PO Box 475 West Ryde NSW 1685  
T: 02 9807 9922 F: 02 9807 9955  
W: [www.zenimports.com.au](http://www.zenimports.com.au)

*Brands built for the outdoors*

**LEATHERMAN**



**LEATHERMAN**



**LEATHERMAN**



**Smith & Wesson**



**hirata**  
OPTICS



**CARSON**



**TURBOFLARE 360**



**MILTECH**



**LED LENSER®**



**PHOTON**  
**MICRO-LIGHT**



**SUPERKNIFE**  
THE ULTIMATE UTILITY



**Pacific**  
CUTLERY





# Water, water everywhere...

Water filters and purifiers for bushwalking,  
by Nick Byrne



The lengths people go to for a good drink... Andy Wakefield on the Mersey River, Tasmania. Matthew Newton. **Right, SweetWater Purifier System.**

## Wild Gear Surveys: What they are and what they're not

(See box on page 63.)

ACCESS TO CLEAN DRINKING-WATER IS NECESSARY when bushwalking. The state of your health can be the difference between a great trip and a hard slog on a bushwalk of any length. Until quite recently you could take water from mountain streams or watercourses in protected areas of Australia with relative confidence. The increasing number of bushwalkers, easier access to popular areas, poor personal hygiene and a lack of understanding of minimal-impact bushwalking techniques

have all contributed to water-quality problems in a number of Australia's bushwalking areas.

Water filters have traditionally been associated with trekking overseas. Their popularity in Australia has been growing as they provide outdoors enthusiasts with access to a quick and effective means of ensuring safe drinking-water. The range of options for improving water quality now includes water filters, purifiers, chemical treatments and mixed-oxidant electrolysis.

Since the last water filter survey in *Wild* no 87 Katadyn and MSR have acquired PUR and SweetWater, respectively. This has not directly affected the models available but the names have been changed. We have included more models from these brands in

the survey in order to give a more complete view of what is available.

This survey evaluates the suitability of a selection of water filters and purifying technologies for bushwalking use in Australia. All models surveyed are available at specialist outdoors shops throughout Australia.

## Use

This is a survey of water filters for bushwalking, divided into four categories. Casual bushwalking (CB) is categorised as day walks and irregular overnight trips throughout the year. For casual travel (CT), the main use will be while overseas or away from known clean-water areas. Ideally, filters for this category are light, portable and easy to use. Devices that are durable, easy to maintain in the field and have a long cartridge life are suitable for frequent bushwalking (FB) assuming the filter is always on your gear check-list. The trekking (T) category assumes that the main use will be for overseas travel, where purification and durability are fundamental.

## Weight

Weights were supplied by the manufacturers.



## Unit type

While a vast range of products is available, different models are better suited for specific applications. All models surveyed are claimed to meet or exceed US Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) standards. That said, microfilters (M) will treat protozoa and bacteria, both of which have a gross-particle size that can be eliminated by pushing water through a structured matrix. Purifiers (P) will also remove viruses that are too small to be removed through filtration alone by combining filtration with a chemical process and/or electrolysis.

## Preferred number of users

This measure compares the output, expected cartridge life and intended use of the unit.

## What is in the water?

### Viruses

The smallest and most dangerous, viruses are generally smaller than one micron and can be as small as 0.004 microns. Therefore most filters require purification through chlorine or iodine treatment to remove them. Not commonly found in Australian water, viruses are generally associated with trekking overseas. Some filter manufacturers suggest that viruses attach themselves to larger bacterial particles but you can't be too careful. Rotavirus, polio, meningitis and strains of hepatitis are the most common illnesses caused by viruses.

### Bacteria

Usually a result of poor camp hygiene and toilet practices, common bacteria include *Campylobacter*, *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) and *Salmonella*. Bacteria also cause diseases such as cholera and legionnaires. Wash your hands and maintain hygiene standards when out bush. Bacteria are medium-sized, ranging from 0.4 to one micron. The best way to treat bacteria in water is through filtration or chemical processes.

### Protozoa

Best known for *Giardia lamblia* and *Cryptosporidium parvum*, protozoa are the largest pathogens in the treatable group, between two and 15 microns. While *Cryptosporidium* is found across the country, including in urban water-supplies, the increasing spread of giardia has been attributed to both international bushwalkers and returning trekkers spreading the cysts through dirty boots and tents. Protozoa are best treated by using a filter, or technology that incorporates electrolysis. Using chemical treatment is problematic as cysts can be resistant to both chlorine and iodine.

It is a suggestion for an ideal share arrangement that is the most economical use for the model tested.

### Pore size

This is a measure of the largest particle size able to pass through the filter; depending on the filter's structure this is either an absolute or nominal measurement. Ceramic filters have an irregular structure so the pore size given is not precise, whereas glass-fibre filters have pores of exactly the same size and an absolute figure can be given. Units are expressed in microns and have been supplied by the manufacturer.

### Filter material

All filters work by pumping pressured water through a material matrix that separates particles from the water. Ceramic filters usually have smaller pore sizes and hence require greater pressure, which can result in lower flow-rates. They tend to be the easiest filters to clean as particles remain on the surface so

that the cartridge can be scoured and particles removed repeatedly. Glass-fibre filters have a larger filter surface-area, allowing slightly better flow-rates. They are made of bundled strands of glass fibres and the cartridges are more difficult to clean. Structured-matrix filters combine filtration with molecular sieving and electro-kinetic attraction and so do not require the smallest pore size to treat water.

The MIOX model works like a small version of a town water-supply using new technology for bushwalking. This is not a filter but rather a chemical treatment combined with electrolysis that purifies water that is already visually clean. Using salt and untreated water to form a brine solution, a 'cocktail' of mixed oxidants is formed by an electrical charge. The 'cocktail' is then added to larger volumes of untreated water neutralising bacteria, viruses and protozoa.

A number of filters include carbon activation. This removes the chemical tastes and odours usually associated with purification



Above, First Need Deluxe purifier. Left, the MIOX Purifier works like a small version of a town water-supply.



treatment. While this is a useful addition, it is important to note that the life of the filter far exceeds the effectiveness of the carbon activation.

### Rate of output

Water filters are complex pieces of equipment that are often used in adverse weather conditions that may affect their performance. It is important to maintain your water filter to get the best performance from it. The rates of output listed assume a properly functioning water filter with clear water.

### Cartridge capacity, litres

Extending the life of your filter and its cartridge relies on access to the cleanest source of water (see Tips for Users). The cartridge capacity is the manufacturer's recommendation and should be considered a maximum. Some

filters are equipped with gauges that indicate the end of the effective life of a cartridge.

### Durability

This is a rating of the weight of the unit (35 per cent) and strength of the material housing (35 per cent). It also considers the streamlined nature of the unit for packing (30 per cent). Other things taken into account were whether the pump handles protruded and were prone to additional pressure and whether the unit was lightweight plastic or also used stainless steel.

## Tips for Users

- Cartridge life and output are directly related to how hard the cartridge has worked while treating the water. Manufacturers' estimates for cartridge life and tools such as gauges are useful measurements. When the cartridge needs replacing the unit will become more difficult to pump.
- Filter water from the cleanest possible source, remembering that you extend the life and effectiveness of your filter by making it work more efficiently.
- To extend the life of your filter, settle and prefilter. In a large container collect the cleanest water you can find and let the gross particles settle. Most units have a prefilter included that separates the larger particles, thus reducing the workload on the filter.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and storing your filter. If your unit has been lying dormant between uses replace the cartridge to ensure proper operation.
- Avoid cross-contamination by separating the input hose and any containers used to gather contaminated water from the output hose or area of the filter. Dry bags work well for this.
- If you are in a remote place carry spare parts and filter cartridges. Staying healthy increases the enjoyment of a trip.

### Portability

The ability to carry your water filter easily and safely is measured in this rating. The size (25 per cent), shape (25 per cent), weight (35 per cent) and durability (15 per cent) of the unit when packed were considered.

### Performance

Is the unit both a microfilter and purifier or does it provide long-lasting filtration for frequent bushwalking applications? All the units surveyed meet or exceed the US EPA standards. Therefore the evaluation of performance examines whether the unit performs well for its intended use in the areas of flow rate (25 per cent), cartridge life (50 per cent) and replacement cartridge cost (25 per cent).

### Maintenance

This is a measure of how easy a model is to maintain in the field, based on the cartridge

## Water filters and purifiers for bushwalking

Use	Weight, grams	Unit type	Preferred number of uses	Filter size, microns	Filter material	Approx rate of output, litres a minute	Cartridge capacity, litres (maximum)	Cartridge replacement cost, \$	Durability	Portability	Performance	Maintenance	Value	Comments	Approx price, \$
<b>General Ecology USA</b> <a href="http://www.purifiersaustralia.com.au">www.purifiersaustralia.com.au</a>															
Microfilte	CB, CT	200	M	1	0.5 A	Structured matrix	1	100	35	●●	●●●	●●●	●●	Includes iodine tablets for treatment; inexpensive	85
First Need Deluxe	CB, CT	430	P	1-3	0.1 A	Structured matrix	1.25	500	110	●●	●●	●●●	●●●	Only filter that also purifies to EPA standard without chemical treatment	230
First Need Trav-L-Pure	CB, CT	625	P	3	0.1 A	Structured matrix	1.25	500	110	●●●	●●	●●●	●●●	As above	350
<b>Katadyn Switzerland</b> <a href="http://www.katadyn.com">www.katadyn.com</a>															
Extrem XR	CT	250	P	1	na	Vinastat, filtration, carbon	na	100	95	●●	●●●●	●●	●	Water-bottle with purification	100
Hiker (IPUR)	CB, FB	310	M	2	0.3 A	Pleated glass-fibre	1	750	95	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	Simple; good flow rate	170
Combi	FB, T	580	M	3	0.2	Ceramic	1	50 000	200	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●●	Simple and effective design; easy to clean	340
Pocket	FB, T	550	M	2	0.2	Ceramic	1	50 000	330	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	Very durable and rugged in design	520
<b>MSR USA</b> <a href="http://www.msrcorp.com">www.msrcorp.com</a>															
SweetWater Microfilter	CB, CT	320	M	2	0.2 A	Pleated glass-fibre	1.25	750	80	●●●	●●●●	●●	●●●	Packs well; good flow rate	160
SweetWater Purifier System	CT, T	395	M/P	2	0.2 A	As above	1.25	750	80	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	As above	180
MiniWorks EX	FB, CT	455	M	2	0.2	Ceramic element, block-carbon core	1	2000	80	●●●	●●●●	●●	●●●	Good field maintenance and durability	180
WaterWorks EX*	FB, T	540	M	2	0.2 A	As above	1	2000	BO, 120 with PES	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	As above; additional filtration through PES membrane	330
MIOX Purifier	CT, CB	100	P	Any	na	na	na	200	40	●●●	●●●●	●●	●●●●	Lightweight; replacement salt packs come with water-quality test kit	320

● poor ●● average ●●● good ●●●● excellent Use: CB casual bushwalking, CT casual travel, FB frequent bushwalking, T trekking Weights were supplied by the manufacturer Unit type: Microfilter, Purifier Pore size: Absolute pore size \* The PES membrane provides secondary filtration after the carbon core, giving the filter an absolute pore size of 0.2 microns. This model still functions without the membrane ● Refers to battery life rather than cartridge capacity na not applicable The country listed after the manufacturer/brand name is the country in which the products are made

and prefilter cleaning and accessibility (40 per cent), availability of replacement kits (20 per cent), and the number of moving parts and O-rings that may fail or need routine maintenance (40 per cent).

## Buy right

When purchasing a water filter your budget, environment and frequency of use are the most important considerations. Where do you plan to use the filter—do you squeeze in the occasional trekking trip to Asia or will it only be used for bushwalking in Australia? In Australia the main focus is on the treatment of bacteria and protozoa that only require the use of a filter. In a number of popular trekking areas overseas you may need to consider a purifier for virus protection.

- Research on the Internet and consult with shop staff.
- Consider how 'heavy' you are on your equipment—some products weigh more but are considerably more durable.
- The ergonomics of pumps are often overlooked by buyers. If possible test the models before purchase. Some models are more comfortable to use than others, particularly if used intensively over a relatively short period.
- Is the unit easily maintained? This includes ready access to spare parts and replacement cartridges.

## Value

This subjective rating places equal value upon the durability, portability, performance and maintenance of each model in relation to the recommended retail price.

## Other options

### Mixed-oxidant technology

is a process of combining electrolysis with a sodium-chloride solution and has been used for treating urban water-supplies for decades. Patented by the MIOX corporation and initially developed for the US military, this technology is now available through specialist outdoor shops. Mixed-oxidant technology combines salt, water and electricity to provide a water-purification system; however, the water is not filtered. The heart of the technology is the MIOX cell that generates the mixed-oxidant solution through electrically charging the mixture of water and salt.

While not suitable for use as a device that 'filters' water, the use of mixed-oxidant technology provides a lightweight, field-stable chlorine treatment that exceeds the US EPA standard for water purifiers, effectively treating viruses, bacteria and protozoa.



## The simple design of the Katadyn Combi.

Similar in application to the MIOX, the Steri-Pen is a small, portable purifier that uses a charge of UV light to kill water-borne microbes. As with the MIOX, it requires a visually clean water source and relies on batteries.

It costs \$499 and is distributed by Rucsaac Supplies. Phone (02) 9546 8455.

**Chemical purification** is an alternative treatment; usually iodine or chlorine is used. This is not the most stable form of treatment and, being dependent on environmental parameters such as temperature and contact time, may not always be effective. It normally also leaves an after-taste in the water. The most common products are Coghlan's Drinking Water Treatment (using iodine) and Micro-Pur Forte tablets that use silver and calcium hypochlorite. Both products cost around \$30 and are widely stocked. ●

Nick Byrne has settled in northern Tasmania after a number of years skiing, walking and riding throughout the mainland and overseas. The combination of short road trips and access to clean water has had the result that he now calls Tassie home.

This survey was refereed by Richard King.



[www.lowealpine.com](http://www.lowealpine.com)

**it's all in  
the detail**  
**take a  
closer  
look**

At Lowe Alpine we pride ourselves on absolute quality and attention to detail, honed by years of design experience. Take a closer look to make sure you're buying the best.

For Stockists:

Phone: (02) 9476 0672

Email: [lowe@intertrek.com.au](mailto:lowe@intertrek.com.au)



## The world's lightest clothing?

**Montane**—a UK-based outdoors clothing company known for its lightweight gear—is now available in Australia. Soft-shell fabrics are used extensively throughout the range, combined with the descriptively named 'Cross-Vent System' which is claimed to allow air flow directly to the armpit and chest areas giving good temperature control. Products include the **Featherlight Smock**—apparently 'the

brand is billed as 'the world's lightest outdoor clothing'; phone **Wildside Design** on (03) 5282 5654 for further information. RRP for the Featherlight and 180 Smock \$129 and \$289, respectively.

Never one to rest on its laurels, **Macpac** has been busy tinkering around with its clothing range. The **Protégé jacket** is a new insulation-layer jacket made from fleece bonded with a wind-proof, breathable coating. Apparently it has a durable waterproof treatment on the face fabric, a full-length zip, two zipped hand pockets and shoulder- and side seams placed so that they don't chafe when worn with a pack.

Other garments in the range have been redesigned. Visit [www.macpac.co.nz](http://www.macpac.co.nz) for more information. The Protégé has a RRP of \$249.

*Left, the Montane Featherlight is aptly named. Below, Macpac's Protégé jacket.*



original ultra-lightweight weather shirt'—at a claimed weight of 85 grams, and the **180 Smock** which, you guessed it, weighs 180 grams. Other products available in Australia include waterproof trousers and jackets, as well as shorts and T-shirts. The



## TRADE NEWS

**Anaconda**, a new 'adventure superstore' opened in Melbourne in December, with plans to open six stores a year in each State and Territory. Billing itself as 'the ultimate adventure playground' the shop has a climbing pinnacle, a campfire and a fish tank complete with Gavin the barramundi. More than 28 000 outdoors products are claimed to be available, from military clothing and four-wheel-drive accessories to climbing gear, sold by 82 'expert' staff. However, with a product range that big it may be hard to have an 'expert' on hand at every opportunity...Visit [www.anaconda.com.au](http://www.anaconda.com.au) for further details.

In other trade news, the 21 shops and wholesale business that form **Snowgum** in Australasia were sold by **Scouts Australia's** Victorian branch to a consortium headed by businessman Ross Elliott. Elliott commented that 'today's growth market is more about fashion with a technology edge—high performance at an affordable price'. Elliott also said that the company wasn't leaving its traditional outdoors market behind. There are plans to open 20 new Snowgum shops during the next three years.

## THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

Judging by the sheer numbers of new **headtorches** entering the market every year, it seems as though more effort is put into producing brand-spanking light designs than promoting world peace! **Black Diamond's** two new 'smart' headlamps, the **Zenix IQ** and the **Vectra IQ**, both have current control that is claimed to ensure a constant light throughout the life of the battery, while a battery monitor lets you know when you're running low. Dimming switches apparently allow a choice to be made between output and battery life, and a tiny, blinking LED light should make the torch easier to find. The Zenix IQ is said to use a new generation LED which throws a 35 metre beam, along with two standard LEDs, while the Vectra IQ is a xenon/LED hybrid that has a beam of up to 150 metres or battery life of up to 160 hours. Contact **Sea to Summit** for further information; phone 1800 787 677, RRP for the Zenix IQ and Vectra IQ \$109 and \$119, respectively.

*Complete with a 'boost button', this headtorch may well be rocket science.*



**Petzl** has also been busy developing its own super-duper light. The **MYO XP headtorch** apparently has a super-bright LED with both a long-range, intense beam (which lights up to 45 metres and has a run time of 70 hours on the maximum mode) and a diffuse, wide-angle option for closer range. There are said to be two other lighting levels as well, offering a maximum battery life of 170 hours. At the touch of the 'boost button', the torch can produce 50 per cent more light—who says it's not rocket science! It also has a lockable power switch and an indicator that shows battery life. Distributed by **Spelean**. RRP \$139. Phone 1800 634 853 for more information.

**The world's lightest outdoor clothing  
is now available in Australia**



featherlite clothing



Featherlight Smock - only 85g

Distributed in Australia by Wildside Design T: 03 5282 5654 E: sales@wildside.com.au  
To view the Australian range of products & details visit [www.wildside.com.au](http://www.wildside.com.au)



Featherlite - ultra breathable weatherproof smock.



180 - The world's lightest, fully waterproof, breathable smock.



Superbly - super breathable technical jacket, 3 layer eVent micro rip-stop.

# SWITCH TO 406

**Only digital 406 MHz  
distress beacons detected  
from February 2009**

**406 MHz distress beacons must  
be registered with AMSA**

[www.amsa.gov.au](http://www.amsa.gov.au)



Australian Government  
Australian Maritime Safety Authority





- Men's moderate trail hiking
- 2.0 mm nubuck upper
- Waterproof and breathable
- Gore-Tex® lining

#### Passo XCR - Earth

Women's available in Sand colour



- Men's outdoor multisport
- Walking, light hikes, casual wear
- Sport-shoe flex and weight
- Vibram® sole provides stability

#### Nagevi - Grey/Silver



- Women's outdoor multisport
- Walking, light hikes, casual wear
- Sport-shoe flex and weight
- Vibram® sole provides stability

#### Nagevi - Sand/Blue

point of contact between technology and nature

WWW.GARMONT.COM

EXPERIENCE THE GARMONT RANGE  
AT YOUR LOCAL OUTDOORS RETAILER

FOR YOUR NEAREST STOCKIST CONTACT  
SITRO GROUP AUSTRALIA PTY. LTD.

PHONE (03) 9543 9533  
www.sitro.com.au

  
**GARMONT**

challenge the elements

## trix

### A tea cosy for your head An ingenious stand-in for a hat, by Stephen Hamilton

If you've forgotten to pack your warm hat or if your only hat gets wet try folding up a Thermal top (a light synthetic one is best) into a square shape that is big enough to cover your head and ears. Use your headtorch strap to hold it on and adjust the excess material so that it is tucked and folded up neatly. You now have a very effective, dry and warm makeshift hat! I've found this method extremely worth while when my only hat is too damp to wear to bed without the risk of my sleeping-bag hood becoming damp. I then hang my damp hat up on the internal clothes-line in the tent and allow it to dry naturally during the night.

Wild welcomes readers' contributions to this section; payment is at our standard rate. Send them to the address at the end of this department.

## Knick-Knacks

### Bedbugs be gone

Sea to Summit's new sleeping-bag liners are treated with Permethrin, an insecticide that is said to be naturally derived and odourless. The insect protection is claimed to last for several wash cycles. Silk and cotton liners are available, both with built-in pillowslips. RRP \$89 and \$39, respectively.

### Eat your way light

We've recently been directed to a Web site that, if it is *bona fide* (which we doubt!), certainly fulfils the criteria of 'new and innovative'. Eastern Active Technologies (EAT) claims to be 'North America's leading manufacturer of consumable outdoor gear', with products such as edible sleeping-mats (**California Rolls**) and rucksacks (**SnackPack 1** and **1D**) that make 'your last mile your lightest mile'. Imagine slipping into your **SnackSack** sleeping-bag at the end of a hard day in the bush and tearing a strip from the blueberry-and-vanilla flavoured exterior. Or better yet, having a few mouthfuls for a leisurely breakfast in bed...EAT has imagination, if nothing else! Visit [www.ediblegear.com](http://www.ediblegear.com) for further details, and a chuckle at the 'News-bites' section. 

New and innovative products of relevance to the rucksack sports (on loan to *Wild*) and/or information about them, including high-resolution digital photos (on CD, not by email or colour slides, are welcome for possible review in this department. Written items should be typed, include recommended retail prices and preferably not exceed 200 words. Send them to *Wild*, PO Box 415, Pahrnan, Vic 3181 or contact us by email: [editorialadmin@wild.com.au](mailto:editorialadmin@wild.com.au)

# The Therm-a-Rest® Fast & Light Advantage

We've made the world's lightest, most compact mattresses with innovative new foam and fabrics to reduce weight by up to 25%, with optimal die-cutting and tapered mattress shapes to allow for smallest roll size ever and our grip-dot bottom keeps mattresses from slipping. For 2005 we've added new women's mattresses, available in ProLite 3™ and ProLite 4™ models, specially designed in response to women's most frequent requests. They're warmer, lighter, and more compact than our men's mattresses, with a unique shape that better fits women's bodies.



# 1

HOW WILL  
YOU USE  
YOUR  
MATTRESS?



■ LIGHTWEIGHT ■

■ COMFORT & WARMTH ■

# 2

WHAT'S MOST  
IMPORTANT TO YOU?

**NEW in 2005**  
**Women's**  
**ProLite 4™**  
and  
**Women's**  
**ProLite 3™**

**ProLite 4™** L R W S  
Lightest, most compact  
4-season mattress

**ProLite 3™** R W S  
Lightest, most compact  
3-season mattress

**Z-Lite™** R S  
Most compact  
foam pad



**Expedition™** L R S  
Best combination of  
comfort and compactness

**Trail™** L R S  
All-purpose  
value mattress

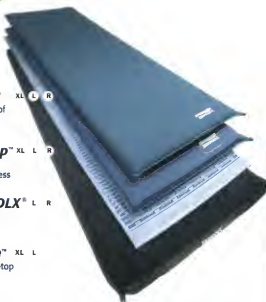
**RidgeRest®** L R S  
Classic lightweight  
foam pad

**BaseCamp™** XL L R  
Best combination of  
comfort and value

**LuxuryCamp™** XL L R  
Warmest, most  
comfortable mattress

**RidgeRest DLX®** L R  
Thickest, warmest  
foam pad

**DreamTime™** XL L  
Three-layer, pillow-top  
mattress



# 3

CHOOSE  
YOUR SIZE.



# THERMA-REST®

MADE IN THE U.S.A.

Distributed in Australia by Spelean Pty. Ltd., P.O. Box 645, AKTARMOON, NSW 1570  
Ph: 02 9966 9800 Fax: 02 9966 9811 thermarest@spelean.com.au www.spelean.com.au



# GUNNS SUES CONSERVATIONISTS

Wood-chip giant claims multimillion dollar damages



*Supporters of the Gunns 20 held a silent vigil in Hobart in December; people protested by shaking their keys. Michael Thomsen*

On 14 December Tasmanian wood-chip giant Gunns Ltd lodged writs against environmentalists for a total of \$6.36 million in damages, claiming they conspired to 'unlawfully interfere with its business and engaged in "corporate vilification"'. The writ seeks compensation from 17 individuals, including five employees of The Wilderness Society and Greens leader Bob Brown, and three groups including TWS. TWS and its staff are accused of organising the campaign and face a total claim of \$3.5 million. In the Age Senator Brown was quoted as saying, 'It is a US-style writ to hector the strongholds of the popular environment movement into silence and

submission'. The 'Gunns 20' intend to fight the writ.

The damages claim has drawn widespread attention in both the national and international media. Protest rallies were held across the country, with more than 600 people attending a demonstration in Hobart on 15 December. For further information visit [www.mcgunns.com](http://www.mcgunns.com)

## ▲ Act now

*Donations for the Gunns 20 collective fighting fund can be made through TWS or any Greens shop. Visit [www.wilderness.org.au](http://www.wilderness.org.au) for further details.*



## Kosciuszko Plan of (mis)Management

Andrew Cox reports on the final draft

The new Plan of Management (PoM) for Kosciuszko National Park will soon be finalised, setting the direction for the park's management for the next 20 years. The new plan is due to be signed by the Minister for the Environment as early as March.



*Site of the proposed expansion of Persher Village that would turn this cluster of ski lodges into a small town with swimming-pool, cinemas and shops. Andrew Cox*

Conservation groups hoped that the plan would reduce damaging impacts; instead it appears that the main threats to the park's natural values will be entrenched or expanded. The government also recently decided to permit a five-year cloud-seeding trial in the park without a proper environmental assessment, and excised roads in the park leading to the main ski resorts.

Horse-riding throughout half of Kosciuszko National Park will be expanded, with the number of exclusive horse camps to double to fourteen, and horse-riding in sensitive localities such as the karst areas at Coleman Plain will continue. The plan does not deliver adequate resources for preventing the spread of feral horses throughout the park, or controlling other feral animals and weeds.

The PoM dodges the question of whether there will be any ski industry in the park in the future despite the prediction that snow cover will shrink by between ten and 40 per cent in the next 20 years. The plan's response is to permit an additional 1300 beds at Persher and encourage year-round use of all resorts in the park instead of encouraging accommodation in neighbouring established towns.

For more information, go to [www.npws.org.au/kosciuszko](http://www.npws.org.au/kosciuszko)

# RECENT WILDERNESS WINS AND LOSSES

## Land conservation, court cases and logging

The South Australian Government recently announced a proposal to protect 500 000 hectares of the Yellabinnia wilderness in a Wilderness Protection Area, as reported by The Wilderness Society. Yellabinnia is north of the Great Australian Bight in SA and makes up part of the Great Victoria Desert. However, around 14 mining exploration licences will also be granted in the area. The public consultation period for the proposal ended in January 2005.

Andrew Cox reports that late last year the New South Wales Government announced the conversion of 7000 hectares of State forest on the south coast to National Parks or State Conservation Areas. Included are the only unprotected area of the upper Deua River catchment, all of the remaining Monga State Forest and an addition to the Murrumbidgee National Park that will protect 'Old Blotchy', a massive spotted gum believed to be more than 500 years old.

The addition of the small area with the old giant completes a twenty-year campaign by conservation groups to protect all State forests east of the Princes Highway between Ulladulla and Batemans Bay. Unfortunately, much larger areas of old-growth and high conservation forest to the west that were expected to be protected, such as Badja State Forest, weren't included.

NSW environment groups are concerned about details of the new draft land-clearing legislation released in November. TWS reports that land clearing will not be prevented



*Old Blotchy, a 500-year-old spotted gum, is now protected in a National Park. Andrew Cox*

unless the draft regulations are tightened, as loopholes and complicated exemptions could allow broad-scale land clearing to continue. New laws to stop land clearing were passed almost eighteen months ago but have yet to be put into action.

A landholder who illegally cleared a Ramsar-listed wetland in north-western NSW was recently fined \$150 000, with his company required to pay a further \$300 000. Additional rehabilitation requirements include compulsory tree planting and the exclusion of stock on the cleared land. In another similar case, bushwalkers in Queensland's Main Range National Park noticed that a remote area had been cleared for grazing and reported it to the Environmental Protection Agency. According to the EPA, in December a Queensland man was found guilty of clearing more than 13 hectares of the land near Killamey, south-west of Brisbane. The defendant was fined \$10 000 and ordered to give up 436 hectares of his land to become part of the National Park.

In Tasmania it is not just the Styx Valley and Tarkine that are under threat. Many areas in the north-east of the State are threatened with logging in the near future. The Blue Tier, an area of wild forest near St Helens, is scheduled to be clear-felled soon despite years of community opposition, and there are coupes due to be logged at the Bay of Fires and the South Sister near St Marys. It is claimed that water catchments face possible contamination if these operations proceed. For further details about these campaigns, visit [www.bluetier.org](http://www.bluetier.org) and [www.southsister.org](http://www.southsister.org)

For further information on any of these important topics, visit [www.wilderness.org.au](http://www.wilderness.org.au)

## Emissions and omissions

### Hazelwood power station loses legal case

In an Australian legal first, a recent tribunal case involving Hazelwood, Australia's most greenhouse-polluting power station, has found that the greenhouse pollution of the power station must be considered as part of the planning process. Environment Victoria reports that this is a powerful legal precedent for considering greenhouse pollution in the planning process. International Power, the company that owns Hazelwood, had applied to the Victorian Government to expand its brown-coal mine, allowing the power station to continue oper-

ating until 2027. The original Environmental Effects Statement for this proposal did not consider the greenhouse gas emissions of Hazelwood as Mary Delahunty, the Minister for Planning at the time, had instructed the panel to overlook the emissions.

It is not clear whether International Power will appeal the decision. It is expected to be very difficult for the company to justify the release of the amount of pollution that the expansion of the coalmine and subsequent energy generation would release.

In other greenhouse news, the Kyoto Protocol was due to become international law on 16 February 2005 without Australia as a signatory. In the absence of a federal policy to cap and trade emissions, the States are still investigating the potential for a national carbon-trading mechanism. The Victorian Government is strongly behind such a scheme. However, in an expected response, industrial groups in the State have warned of massive job losses if the proposed emissions trading scheme becomes a reality.

# Let 'em flow, let 'em flow, let 'em flow

River health around the nation



*The Gulf of Carpentaria's Smithburne River contains major migration staging sites. It is a tributary of the Gilbert River, one of the many rivers not protected in the proposed 'Wild Rivers Act'. Wayne Lawler*

A leaked report from the Murray Darling Basin Commission in November 2004 showed that in the previous 18 months the number of river red gums counted as stressed, dying or dead on the Murray had risen by a quarter to 75 per cent. According to Environment Victoria in issue 211 of the *EV News*, this follows studies showing that: up to half of the Murray's native freshwater fish species are threatened with extinction; in almost all the Murray Basin's rivers salt levels are rising; and since 1901 the average annual flow to the sea through the Murray mouth has been reduced by around 80 per cent.

The commitment by governments to give an annual increased flow rate of 500 billion litres to the Murray by 2006 may well be too little too late, especially as this is only one-third the amount of water that scientists believe the river system needs to survive.

The *Colong Bulletin* no 207 reports that a plan by BHP-Billiton to establish a four-and-a-half kilometre long-wall coalmine under the Nepean River in NSW is likely to cause poisoning of the river for up to seven years, and lead to substantial loss of flow. Similar mining under the

Cataract River began in 1988 and by 1994 hundreds of cracks had appeared in the riverbed, some acting as vents for flammable gas. The river lost its water flow; even now BHP daily sends 2.5 mega-litres of water down the river to counter the water loss. There are several other rivers that have been severely damaged by similar mines. BHP-Billiton has been asked to prepare an environmental impact statement; however, previous EIS reports for the company haven't recommended any mining-subsidence protection zones for riverbeds.

On a positive note, in 2004 the Queensland Government announced its intention to create a 'Wild Rivers Act' to protect some of the State's remaining wild river systems. This would prohibit activities such as dam building and land clearing around these waterways. The Wilderness Society claims that there are 60 river systems that retain wild river status; however, as it stands, the proposed Act would protect only 19 of these. TWS believe that the legislation is a very good start but further work is needed.

For further information about the Wild Rivers Act, visit [www.wildrivers.org.au](http://www.wildrivers.org.au)

## Wood-chips

### Grazing increases blazing

Eli Greig reports that a long-awaited report into cattle grazing in the Victorian Alps and its effects upon fire suppression has been released. The report appears to contradict the theory that 'grazing reduces blazing' (supported by mountain cattlemen) by noting that cattle generally eat the fire-suppressing flora, avoiding bushes with high oil-levels, which then colonise the area when the cattle move on. The report notes that the critical issue is the type of vegetation around rather than whether it has been grazed. Both this report and the State Government Esplan Inquiry into the 2003 alpine bush-fires conclude that the current grazing regime has no positive impact on fire control.

### Nuclear news

Leading environment groups have joined residents and the NSW Government in calling for the rejection of an application to operate a new nuclear reactor in Sydney. The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) has applied for a licence to run a new reactor, being built at present at the Lucas Heights nuclear facility in southern Sydney. Critics of the reactor plan point to unresolved safety, security and waste issues, with the key hurdle the management of nuclear waste. However, it was reported in the *Australian* on 21 January that spent fuel rods from the proposed reactor would be accepted by the US for the next ten years, a move condemned by the Australian Conservation Foundation as a quick fix. Public submissions on the reactor license can be made until 29 April 2005; for further details, go to [www.arpansa.gov.au/rtrrp\\_operating.htm](http://www.arpansa.gov.au/rtrrp_operating.htm)

### Activist rights?

Melbourne's Fitzroy Legal Service has launched a new Web site designed to help activists to find accurate and up-to-date information about their rights and other legal issues. It can be found at [www.activistrights.org.au](http://www.activistrights.org.au)

### Mobile recycling

It is estimated that there are between ten and 18 million unused mobile phones in Australia, most of which will end up as landfill. The Spastic Centre is supplying free post satchels for mobile phones, which it will then recycle. Go to [www.mobilephonerecycling.com.au](http://www.mobilephonerecycling.com.au) to order a satchel. 📱

Readers' contributions to this department, including high-resolution digital photos or colour slides, are welcome. Items of less than 200 words are more likely to be published. Send them to *W&L*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181 or email [editorial@wld.com.au](mailto:editorial@wld.com.au)



01

02

03

04

05



## WALK THROUGH LADAKH

Have you ever considered visiting Ladakh? The Land of Buddhism, monks, oracles, fluttering flags, trekking through spectacular valleys with a backdrop of the Himalayas and visiting the temples of Leh

Join the MS Society and Intrepid Travel to share 13 days of laughter, team spirit and achievement. See parts of the mighty Himalayas that many visitors never see.

Phone (03) 9845 2700 and ask for Kyla Skues

### WHAT'S YOUR COMMITMENT?

Your Personal Contribution is a payment of \$500 (including GST) which is sent with your registration form. You then agree to fundraise a minimum total of \$5,500 in order to confirm a place on the trip. Alternatively you can pay the \$5,500 yourself. Past experience has shown that fundraising is achievable and we will provide you with lots of support to help you reach your target.

### FITNESS

This event is open to anyone of reasonable fitness, provided that you are willing to train prior to the trip. The MS Society retains the right to exclude any individual who does not have a sufficient level of fitness to take part in the tour. Some of the distances are quite long and we will be encountering numerous hills on the challenge.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THIS MS CHALLENGE?

International flights, group visas, an internal flight where applicable, accommodation, meals (as specified), drinking water, a support vehicle and (Intrepid Travel) local guides, 3 Western meals (where specified) and a member of staff from the MS Society.

### WHO IS THE TOUR OPERATOR?

Intrepid Travel describes itself as one of the world's most experienced providers of adventure travel. It has operations in over 13 different countries, with more than 3,300 agents and 20,000 passengers annually. Intrepid has been operating trips to Asia since 1989 and has quickly established a reputation as one of the industry leaders for its innovative and responsible style of travel.



[www.mschallenge.com.au](http://www.mschallenge.com.au)



## Blue Mountains World Heritage

by Alex Colley and Henry Gold (Colong Foundation for Wilderness, 2004, RRP \$50).

This is a magnificent book. A great collection of the best of Henry Gold's photos of the greater Blue Mountains illustrate an inter-



esting text that is largely written by Alex Colley.

It is inspirational to open the book and note that Colley was born in 1909. He has been an active bushwalker since the 1930s and joined the Colong Committee (as it was then called) when it was formed in 1968 to save the Colong Caves from limestone mining. To this day Colley is still an active volunteer for the Colong Foundation. His text details not only the battle for Colong Caves but also the fight to stop the logging of the Boyd Plateau and the damming of the Colo River. These were all important conservation issues where success was not certain. It was only due to the tireless efforts of people such as the authors and Milo Dunphy that these battles were won.

One of the key weapons in these campaigns were Henry Gold's photos. Special books of them were prepared for submissions or given to politicians. Many of these photos are reproduced in the book. Gold's photographs are works of art. His lovingly crafted black-and-white photos are particularly striking.

This book is highly recommended.  
David Noble

## Freycinet National Park, Tasmania

by Rob Blakers (Wilderness Photo, 2004, RRP \$39.95).

This beautifully presented coffee-table book is a celebration of Freycinet, a National Park referred to as 'one of the finest of its size in

Australia, if not the world'. Even a cursory flick through Rob Blakers's book lends credence to this claim. *Wild* readers are already familiar with Blakers's work (see *Folios in Wild* nos 91, 82, 57 and 41) and his photos are of their usual high quality. The delicate details and expansive vistas of the peninsula are captured, as are its moods and inhabit-

ants: there is much more to this park than Wineglass Bay. Jamie Kirkpatrick provides an informative, interesting and well-written text explaining the history and natural heritage of Tasmania's second most popular National Park.

Megan Holbeck

## Federation Australia's Adventure Peak

by Kevin Doran (Desdichado Publishing, 2004, RRP \$16.50).

A personal account of the author's 30-year love affair with Federation Peak, the text details his 23 attempts at the peak, of which 16 were successful. The most interesting are three tough winter trips done more than 20 years ago. The book also includes a brief history of the peak which is somewhat lacking as it is primarily a summary of articles from *Tasmanian Tramp* (the Hobart Walking Club's magazine) and leaves out some significant ascents. Overall, an interesting read for those who have visited Federation.

John Chapman

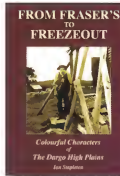


## From Fraser's to Freezeout

by Ian Stapleton (published by the author, 2004, RRP \$35 and p&p \$8 Vic, \$10 NSW) from the author, Feathertop Tk, Harrietteville Vic 3741).

Like Stapleton's first book on the pioneers of the Mt Hotham area, *Hairy-Chested History*, his latest tome introduces us to many intriguing characters who helped to develop the isolated area of the Victorian Alps between Mt Hotham and Dargo, including the Dargo High Plains and the nearby gold-fields. *From Fraser's to Freezeout* contains loads of historical photographs as well as numerous quotes from the old-timers themselves. If you've an interest in the history of the High Country, you'll enjoy this book.

Glenn van der Knijff



## Walking on the Wilder Side...In the Conondales

by Cheryl Seabrook and others (Conondale Range Committee, 2004, RRP \$17, [www.exploreconondales.com](http://www.exploreconondales.com)).

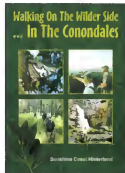


The Conondales are a wilderness area in the Sunshine Coast hinterland, near Kenilworth, not widely known outside the region. You may deduce from the title that this is a walking guidebook but it is more than that. Many good walking routes are suggested but there are also

notes on mountain biking, camping, vehicle touring and local history.

The flora and fauna sections are informative, easy to read and illustrated with quality sketches and photographs. The content reflects the passion of members of the Conondale Range Committee, many of whom have been working to save the Conondales since the 1960s.

An excellent guide to a remarkable region.  
John Daly



## Discovering Grampians-Gariwerd

by Alistair and Bruce Paton (Victorian National Parks Association, 2004, RRP \$19.95).

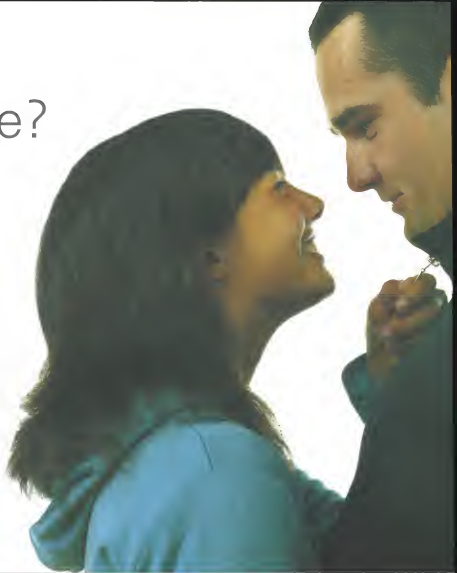
The subtitle 'A visitor's guide to Grampians National Park' sums up both the book's purpose and its contents. This small paperback is an informative guide, covering the history, geography and flora and fauna of the Grampians, as well as scenic drives and walks in the area. It is well laid out and user friendly. It would be a useful book for visitors to the Grampians (especially those from overseas) or people unfamiliar with the region. **B**

MH

Publications for possible review are welcome. Send them with a digital image of the cover for reproduction, and RRP, to *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahara, Vic 3181.



# why compromise?



cocoon

When it comes to softness and durability, silk is the benchmark.

Life is too short to compromise so why have something that's almost as good as silk when you can have the real thing?

Silkbody, one of the fastest growing brands of next-to-skin and second layer garments in Australia and New Zealand, have developed a range of outdoor gear made primarily from silk that are warmer, softer, more durable and far more resistant to pilling than other natural and synthetic products. Silkbody fabrics are highly breathable. The natural moisture management and temperature regulation means you stay dry and comfortable in any temperature.

Silkbody is about capturing all the amazing qualities of silk that have enchanted civilisations for centuries and presenting them in a way that is fresh and innovative. Best of all, there is no uncomfortable itch.

The Silkbody range not only feels great but looks great as well. While having all the benefits of traditional silk, Silkbody garments have a stylish matt finish that highlights the toughness of a man and the beauty of a woman.

Before you consider any other garment to keep you warm, from the great outdoors of Australia to the peaks of the Himalayas, talk to a Silkbody dealer and ask to feel the difference.

Available at all good outdoor retailers.

 **SILKBODY**  
*feel the difference*

  
adventure  
EXTREME

Contact Adventure Extreme on 02 4966 1377 for your nearest stockist or log onto [www.adventureextreme.com.au](http://www.adventureextreme.com.au)

**Wild Directories are the comprehensive reference point for Australasian outdoors-related businesses. For only \$48 an issue you can have your business listed here and reach a worldwide audience. Wild Directories—gateway to Australia's outdoors.**

For information on listing your business in this regular feature, please contact Wild Publications Pty Ltd, PO Box 415, Prahran, VIC 3181. Phone (03) 9826 8482, fax (03) 9826 3787. Email [advertising@wild.com.au](mailto:advertising@wild.com.au)

## Suppliers

### National Mail-order

**Alpsport**  
1045 Victoria Rd  
West Ryde NSW 2114  
Ph (02) 9858 5844

**Canoes Plus Mail-order**  
140 Cotham Rd  
Kew VIC 3101  
Ph (03) 9816 9411

**Eastern Mountain Centre**  
68 Whitehorse Rd  
Deepdene 3130  
Ph (03) 9817 1477

[hikelight.com.au](http://hikelight.com.au)  
[sales@hikelight.com.au](mailto:sales@hikelight.com.au)  
[www.hikelight.com.au](http://www.hikelight.com.au)

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd Mail-order**  
PO Box 1091  
Brunswick MDC VIC 3056  
Ph 1800 333 484

**K2 Base Camp**  
140 Wickham St  
Fortitude Valley Qld 4006  
Ph (07) 3854 1340

**Mountain Equipment**  
491 Kent St  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Fax (02) 9264 2645

**On Rope**  
[www.onrope.com.au](http://www.onrope.com.au)  
Ph (02) 9709 6299

[outdoors.com.au](http://outdoors.com.au)  
[sales@outdoors.com.au](mailto:sales@outdoors.com.au)  
[www.outdoors.com.au](http://www.outdoors.com.au)

**Paddy Pallin**  
[www.paddypallin.com.au](http://www.paddypallin.com.au)  
Ph 1800 805 398

**Recreational Fabrics**  
PO Box 338  
Ararat VIC 3377  
Ph (03) 5356 6309

[sleeping-bags.com.au](http://sleeping-bags.com.au)  
[sales@sleeping-bags.com.au](mailto:sales@sleeping-bags.com.au)  
[www.sleeping-bags.com.au](http://www.sleeping-bags.com.au)

**Snowgum**  
Reply Paid 1343  
PO Box 1343  
Clayton South VIC 3169  
Ph 1800 811 312

**The Safety Network**  
PO Box 917  
Jindabyne NSW 2627  
[www.safetynetwork.com.au](http://www.safetynetwork.com.au)

**Torre Mountaintrek Pty Ltd**  
205 Moggill Rd  
Taringa Qld 4068  
Ph (07) 3870 2699

**Wild Publications Pty Ltd**  
PO Box 415  
Prahran VIC 3181  
Ph (03) 9826 8483

### Australian Capital Territory

**Belconnen Camping World**  
Shop 4  
Oatley Crt  
Belconnen 2617  
Ph (02) 6253 2699

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
20 Allara St  
Canberra 2600  
Ph (02) 6257 5926

**Mooble**  
Shop 6, Bailey's Corner  
143 London Circuit  
Canberra 2601  
Ph (02) 6162 4985

**Mountain Designs**  
6 Lonsdale St  
Braddon 2601  
Ph (02) 6247 7488

**Paddy Pallin**  
11 Lonsdale St  
Canberra 2600  
Ph (02) 6257 3883

**Snowgum**  
9 Lonsdale St  
Braddon 2601  
Ph (02) 6257 2250

**The Great Outdoors Centre**  
Canberra  
18-24 Townshend St  
Phillip 2606  
Ph (02) 6282 3424

**New South Wales**

**Aktiv8 Outdoors**  
115 Oxford St  
Bondi Junction 2022  
Ph (02) 9389 3033

**Aktiv8 Outdoors**  
Lwr ground floor  
511 Kent St  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 9266 0122

**Alpsport**  
1045 Victoria Rd  
West Ryde 2114  
Ph (02) 9858 5844

**Birkenstock Soul**  
Shop 8, Anderson Ave  
Chatswood 2067  
Ph (02) 9411 6522

**Birkenstock Soul**  
434 Parramatta Rd  
Petersham 2049  
Ph (02) 9518 1311

**Bushcraft Equipment**  
29 Stewart St  
Wollongong 2500  
Ph (02) 4229 6748

**GoWild Glenbrook**  
1A Ross St  
Glenbrook 2773  
Ph (02) 4739 3152

**Hangdog Climbing Gym**  
Pty Ltd  
130 Auburn St  
Wollongong 2500  
Ph (02) 4225 8369

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
Shop A7, Redyard  
100 Parramatta Rd  
Auburn 2144  
Ph (02) 9737 0900

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
Mandarin Centre  
Cnr Victor and Albert Sts  
Chatswood 2067  
Ph (02) 9410 0963

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
38 The Kingsway  
Cronulla 2230  
Ph (02) 9527 6600

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
Birkenhead Point Outlet  
Centre  
Shop D3.1a  
Rosedale St  
Drummoyne 2047  
Ph (02) 9181 5766

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
6 Northcott Dr  
Kotara 2289  
Ph (02) 4952 1233

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
Shop 35  
Town Hall Arcade  
Cnr Kent & Bathurst Sts  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 9261 8901

**Kinetix Sports Clothing**  
[www.kinetixsports.com.au](http://www.kinetixsports.com.au)  
Ph (02) 6493 6490

**Mountain Designs**  
490 Dean St  
Albury 2640  
Ph (02) 6021 0133

**Mountain Designs**  
Shop 6012  
Westfield Shopping Centre  
Bondi Junction 2022  
Ph (02) 9389 9113

**Paddy Pallin**  
527 Kingsway  
Miranda 2228  
Ph (02) 9525 6829

**Paddy Pallin**  
Shop 1, 74 Macquarie St  
Parramatta 2150  
Ph (02) 9633 1113

**Paddy Pallin**  
507 Kent St  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 9264 2685

**Single Rope Technique**  
9 Nelson Ave  
Padstow 2211  
Ph (02) 9796 3455

**Summit Gear**  
80 Bathurst Rd  
Katoomba 2780  
Ph (02) 4782 3018

**Trek & Travel—City**  
447 Kent St  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 9261 3435

**Warners Bay Camping World**  
Unit 3, 276 Macquarie Rd  
Warners Bay 2282  
Ph (02) 4956 6183

**Steps Great Outdoors Centre**  
104 Gympie Rd  
Strathpine 4500  
Ph (07) 3889 7344

**Trek & Travel**  
Shop 23  
Castletown Shopping World  
Townsville 4812  
Ph (07) 4724 4346

### South Australia

**Annapurna Outdoor Shop**  
210 Rundle St  
Adelaide 5000  
Ph (08) 8223 4633

**Flinders Camping**  
187 Rundle St  
Adelaide 5000  
Ph (08) 8223 1913

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
235 Pine St  
Adelaide 5000  
Ph (08) 8223 6335

**Mountain Designs**  
208 Rundle St  
Adelaide 5000  
Ph (08) 8232 0690

**Paddy Pallin**  
228 Rundle St  
Adelaide 5000  
Ph (08) 8232 3155

**Scout Outdoor Centre**  
192 Rundle St  
Adelaide 5000  
Ph (08) 8223 5544

**The Wilderness Shop**  
Shop 13  
Victoria Square Arcade  
Adelaide 5000  
Ph (08) 8231 0625

### Tasmania

**Allgoods Pty Ltd**  
6 Formby Rd  
Devonport 7310  
Ph (03) 6424 7099

**Allgoods Pty Ltd**  
93 Harrington St  
Hobart 7000  
Ph (03) 6236 9969

**Allgoods Pty Ltd**  
71 York St  
Launceston 7250  
Ph (03) 6331 3644

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
16 Salamanca Sq  
Hobart 7000  
Ph (03) 6224 3027

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
18 Kingsway  
Launceston 7250  
Ph (03) 6334 7199

**Mountain Designs**  
2 Rooke St  
Devonport 7310  
Ph (03) 6424 8699

**Mountain Designs**  
11 Elizabeth St  
Hobart 7000  
Ph (03) 6234 3900

**Mountain Designs**  
120 Charles St  
Launceston 7250  
Ph (03) 6334 0988

### Victoria

**Ajays Snow Country Sports**  
115 Canterbury Rd  
Heathmont 3135  
Ph (03) 9720 4647

**Anacanda**  
300 Canterbury Rd  
Bayswater 3153  
Ph (03) 8720 4000

**Arapiles Mountain Shop**  
69 Main St  
Nastmuk 3409  
Ph (03) 5387 1529

**All Wild Directories are also online. They can be seen at [www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)**

### Northern Territory

**NT General Stores Pty Ltd**  
42 Cavenagh St  
Darwin 0800  
Ph (08) 8981 8242

**Trek & Travel**  
Unit 1, 1 Travers St  
Coconut Grove 0810  
Ph (08) 8985 4777

**Queensland**

**Adventure Camping Equipment**  
11 Ross River Rd  
Townsville 4812  
Ph (07) 4775 6116

**Adventure Equipment Cairns**  
133 Grafton St  
Cairns 4870  
Ph (07) 4031 2669

**It's Extreme**  
32 Spence St  
Cairns 4870  
Ph (07) 4051 0344

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
Lwr ground floor  
165 Elizabeth St  
Brisbane 4000  
Ph (07) 3210 2777

**Kathmandu Pty Ltd**  
Shop 1-4, 728 Ann St  
Fortitude Valley 4006  
Ph (07) 3252 8054

**K2 Base Camp**  
140 Wickham St  
Fortitude Valley 4006  
Ph (07) 3854 1340

**Mountain Designs**  
109 Albert St  
Brisbane 4000  
Ph (07) 3221 6756

**Mountain Designs**  
120 Wickham St  
Fortitude Valley 4006  
Ph (07) 3216 1866

**Mountain Designs**  
27 High St  
Toowoomba 4006  
Ph (07) 3870 8387

**Mountain Designs**  
Shop 536-537  
Westfield Shopping Centre  
Chatswood 2067  
Ph (02) 9412 4111

**Mountain Designs**  
(factory outlet)  
Shop 179, Birkenhead Point  
Outlet Centre  
Drummoyne 2047  
Ph (02) 9181 5898

**Mountain Designs**  
190 Katoomba St  
Katoomba 2780  
Ph (02) 4782 5999

**Mountain Designs**  
Unit 2  
Cnr King and National Park Sts  
Newcastle 2300  
Ph (02) 4962 3311

**Mountain Designs**  
499 Kent St  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 9267 3822

**Mountain Equipment**  
72 Archer St  
Chatswood 2067  
Ph (02) 9419 6955

**Mountain Equipment**  
491 Kent St  
Sydney 2000  
Ph (02) 9264 5888

**New Anderson Maps**  
(Wholesale)  
30 Fawcett St  
Ryde 2112  
Ph (02) 9878 2809

**On Rope**  
11 Nelson Ave  
Padstow 2211  
Ph (02) 9709 6299

**Paddy Pallin**  
Opposite Thredbo turn-off  
Jindabyne 2627  
Ph (02) 6456 2922  
or 1800 623 459

**Paddy Pallin**  
166B Katoomba St  
Katoomba 2780  
Ph (02) 4782 4466

**Wild, Mountain, High, Climbing and Rock** magazines from the 80s and 90s (over 80 magazines). Very good condition. Phone Gerald with offers on 214-222-0000.

Simply phone, fax,  
email or write to tell  
us the wording of your  
ad, pay for it with a  
cheque or credit card



## REPAIRS

**Big John's Retreads.** Specialist rock-shoe repairs for over a decade. Resoles \$45/pair. Rand repairs \$15/pair. For the NEW BIG RUBBER RETREAD \$5 extra/pair. Return post-normal \$5/pair. Express \$6/pair, or \$8.75/two pairs. All rubbers pneumatically bonded. Five Ten C4 Stealths, Stealth II, La Sportiva, Vibram and Boreal rubbers available. Express mid-week service. Supply contact details. To: Big John's Retreads, PO Box N122, Petersham North, 2049. Phone (0407) 205 771. Order form and more info: [www.bigjohn.com.au](http://www.bigjohn.com.au) email [bigjohn@bigjohn.com.au](mailto:bigjohn@bigjohn.com.au)

## Remote Equipment Repairs.

Specialising in repairs and alterations to packs, tents, sleeping-bags (cleaning and down-boosting), Gore-tex rainwear, fleece and ski clothing, alloy tent poles, self-inflating camp rest, reproofing tents and rainwear, zippers. Australia-wide service. Third floor, 373 Little Bourke St, Melbourne, 3000. Phone (03) 9670 2586, fax (03) 9670 7412, email [remote@mira.net](mailto:remote@mira.net)

## Torre Mountaintopcraft.

Rock shoe resoling. Outdoor gear repairs. Sleeping-bag washing, repairs and boosting. Poles, tents, packs. 2005 Moggill Rd, Taringa, Qld 4068. Phone (07) 3870 2699 [www.torremountaintopcraft.com.au](http://www.torremountaintopcraft.com.au)

## Venus repair workshop.

Repairs and alterations to

ruksacks, sleeping-bags, tents, tent poles, clothing including ski wear and Gore-tex. Venus Repair Workshop, Suite 36, 104 Bathurst St, Sydney, NSW. Phone (02) 9267 0706, [venusrepairs@bigpond.com](mailto:venusrepairs@bigpond.com)

## TRAVEL INSTRUCTION

**Absolute Mongolia!** Adventures in the Land of Blue Skies—trekking, biking, mountaineering, camel- and horse treks. Beat the rush to this undiscovered land! [www.gomongolia.com](http://www.gomongolia.com) info@gomongolia.com Phone/fax 97 6 1131 5655.

exquisite snorkelling. Whale watch aboard *MV Tropic Bird!* [www.fisico.com](http://www.fisico.com) [www.whalediscoveries.com](http://www.whalediscoveries.com)

**Arnhem Land.** Ten days or three weeks of walking with traditional Aboriginal guides. For full details see our advertisement on page 10. [www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au](http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au) phone: (08) 8985 2134; email: [walkabout@ais.net.au](mailto:walkabout@ais.net.au)

**Challenging bushwalks.** Experience solitude and inspiration in some of the most remote wilderness areas in the Alpine National Park. Local guides share their love and

**Coral Sea Kayaking.** paddling to uninhabited tropical islands in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. From three-day island trips to our seven-day Hinchinbrook Island Wilderness Expedition. We can show you the best sea kayaking in tropical north Queensland. Small groups led by professional Sea kayak hire is available for experienced paddlers. Phone/fax 61 7 4068 9154, email [coralseakayaking@bigpond.com](mailto:coralseakayaking@bigpond.com) Web site [www.coralseakayaking.com](http://www.coralseakayaking.com)

**DCXP Mountain Journeys.** Quality international climbing expeditions: Antarctica by yacht; Himalayan treks, climbs and courses; Aconcagua; Kokoda Track. Visit us at [www.DCXP.com](http://www.DCXP.com) or 208 Rundle St, Adelaide. (08) 8232 4433.

**European mountain treks** with Jennie and Marcus Benacke. Greek Islands, 29 days in May, and Corinica, 31 days in June 2005. Check out our Web site [www.eurotreks.co.nz](http://www.eurotreks.co.nz) or email [info@eurotreks.co.nz](mailto:info@eurotreks.co.nz) Phone/fax: 64 3 337 1605.

## Jagged Globe Mountaineering w.w.

Internationally respected operator. Over 30 professionally guided or assisted worldwide climbs. 48-page colour brochure available. Email: [sports@ocean.com.au](mailto:sports@ocean.com.au) phone: (03) 9598 2922.

**Mr Aspiring Web site:** Geoff Poynt's guided treks, climbs and courses. Visit our Web site for information, mountain news

and photo gallery. [www.mountainnrec.co.nz](http://www.mountainnrec.co.nz) Email [geoff@mountainnrec.co.nz](mailto:geoff@mountainnrec.co.nz)

**The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.** An exciting adventure- and personal-challenge programme for those aged 14–25. Use your outdoors activities as part of your Bronze, Silver or Gold. Details: phone (03) 8412 9333.

**Trek Nepal** at affordable prices with experienced Australian guide. Also India, Tibet, China, Vietnam and more, including sightseeing. Ask for Hans at Onda Travel, licence 2TA003055, ABN 91 003 873 130. Phone (02) 9547 2155 or (02) 9560 3307 (ah).

**Vietnam for \$600.** Air fare, accommodation, food, Cycle Vietnam up close. November 2005, two weeks. Support charity. Phone Chris: 0423 780 716; [www.memorablechallenges.com](http://www.memorablechallenges.com)

**Walking tours in the French Pyrenees** and Compostella Pilgrim Trail. Let me show you my region—discover the beauty of its people, culture and scenery. Phone (05) 0502 0301 [www.acenet.com.au/~pyrenees](http://www.acenet.com.au/~pyrenees)

**Wild Asia treks** well beyond the Silk Road to former Soviet mountains: Peak Lenin, Khan Tengri, Peak Communism, along with Chinese K2 and Kongur/Muztagh-Ata peaks. Local guides and Western leaders, with full service. Brochure: phone (03) 9672 3372; [www.wildasiatravel.com](http://www.wildasiatravel.com)

## All Wild Classifieds are also online. They can be seen at [www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)

**Adventure Consultants—** world-renowned expedition-guiding company operating in the Himalaya, South America, Antarctica, Arctic Seven Summits since 1991, guided ascents and Climbing School in New Zealand's Southern Alps. Directed by Guy Cotter, from our base in Wanaka, NZ, we organise personalised expeditions and treks focused on your reaching the summit in style! [www.adventure.co.nz](http://www.adventure.co.nz) Phone 64 3 443 8711, [info@adventure.co.nz](mailto:info@adventure.co.nz)

**Adventures in the Kingdom of Tonga!** Guided sea-kayak tours in the Vava'u and Ha'apai islands featuring Polynesian heritage, idyllic camping and

knowledge of the Alps, the flora and fauna. Gippsland High Country Tours, [jennyghett@netspace.net.au](mailto:jennyghett@netspace.net.au) Phone (03) 5157 5556.

**China for \$600.** Air fare, accommodation, food. Cycle spectacular Tiger Leaping Gorge. Visit ancient towns. October 2005, two weeks. Support charity while having an adventure of a lifetime. Phone Chris: 0423 780 716; [www.memorablechallenges.com](http://www.memorablechallenges.com)

**China for \$600.** Air fare, accommodation, food. Hike the magnificent Great Wall of China. September 2005, two weeks. Support charity. Phone Chris: 0423 780 716; [www.memorablechallenges.com](http://www.memorablechallenges.com)

## Wild GUIDES YOUR BUSH POCKET-PARTNERS

These booklets will guide you to Australia's best wild places, and give advice you can use in the bush.

See [www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au) for a full list of contents.

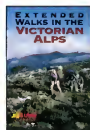
All booklets are covered with clear plastic. Only \$8.20 each (\$8.50 overseas—airmail).

Available from leading outdoors shops or direct from Wild Publications, the publisher of *Wild*, Australia's wilderness adventure magazine.

Receive a free booklet of your choice when you subscribe to *Wild*. See the subscription advertisement in this issue.



Wild Publications Pty Ltd, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181. Phone (03) 9826 8483, fax (03) 9826 3787, email [mailorder@wild.com.au](mailto:mailorder@wild.com.au) Web site [www.wild.com.au](http://www.wild.com.au)



WILD 111

# THE SUMMIT

PULL HANDLE

↑  
**PULL HANDLE**

## CLEARANCES

DECEMBER 1997

16<sup>TH</sup> & 23<sup>RD</sup>

JANUARY 1998

TUESDAYS & FRIDAYS

FEBRUARY & MARCH 1998

FRIDAYS

FINAL CLEARANCE

27.3.1998

*No response from  
Santa? Next year use a  
different postbox! (This  
one is in the Victorian  
Alps.) Stephen Curtain*

Wild welcomes slides for this page;  
payment is at our standard rate.  
Send them to Wild, PO Box 415,  
Pahran, Vic 3181.



**MATCH YOUR INTENSITY  
TO THE TASK.**



## **MYO XP headlamp**

**Climbing, running or racing, the new MYO XP  
adapts perfectly to your pursuit:**

- ~ Three brightness levels (low, med., high)
- ~ Diffusion lens for wide or focused light
- ~ Boost mode that throws light a piercing 65 m.
- ~ Battery level indicator




The MYO XP. One headlamp for any pursuit.

Exclusively distributed in Australia by Spelean Pty Ltd.  
Call 1800 634 853 for your nearest stockist.  
[www.spelean.com.au](http://www.spelean.com.au) email: [myoxp@spelean.com.au](mailto:myoxp@spelean.com.au)



**PETZL®**

hands  
**free**  
lighting®



VectraIQ

## JUICED UP

Using four SuperBright LEDs in a reflective module that is recessed within a custom-engineered reflector, the new Vectra IQ will light up any climber or backcountry user's night. Juiced by four AAs, the LED cluster provides brilliant proximity lighting for fine-tuning belays and rigging rappels. Its powerful, far-reaching xenon beam offers artifact-free light for route and trail navigation. Cutting-edge electronics feature constant illumination, mode memory, a battery-power meter and a strobe "Find Me" light. A concave, dual-density battery box is kind to your noggin while providing simple, in-field access. For intelligent lighting, the award-winning family of Black Diamond Integrated Hybrid headlamps leads the way.



HELION



GEMINI



SUPERNOVA



POLAR STAR



SPACESHOT2

For Shops stocking the complete line of Integrated Hybrid headlamps, call Sea to Summit on 1800 787 677

 **Black Diamond™**  
PERFORMANCE LIGHTWARE